

Herald of the Star.

VOL. III. No. 9.

September 11th, 1914

CONTENTS

	PAGE
IN THE STARLIGHT. <i>By George S. Arundale</i> ...	502
IDEALS OF THE FUTURE. VIII.—THE IDEAL OF SCIENCE. <i>By Annie Besant</i> ...	509
THE PROBLEM OF DESTITUTION. <i>By W. C. M. Lloyd</i> ...	511
MEETING OF LONDON MEMBERS ...	518
A MESSAGE FROM THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS ...	521
HASTENING THE COMING. <i>By Mary E. Moxey</i> ...	523
LE FEU MYSTIQUE. <i>By Louis Revel</i> ...	531
THE WAY OF THE SOUL ...	539
WAR. <i>By Jasper Smith</i> ...	540
TIM: A STORY OF THE FUTURE ...	542
THE GOAL AND THE WAY. <i>By Kathleen Cooper</i> ...	545
NOTES AND COMMENTS ...	546

As The Herald of The Star proposes to include articles from many different sources on topics of widely varied interest, it is clearly understood that the writing of such an article for the "Herald" in no way involves its author in any kind of assent to, or recognition of, the particular views for which this Magazine, or the Order of The Star in the East, may stand.



IN THE STARLIGHT

— G. ARUNDALE.

NOW that we are in the midst of big happenings, of great changes preparing the way for the coming of the World-Teacher, it becomes imperatively urgent that every member of the Order of the Star in the East should do all in his power not only to serve his country to the very best of his ability, but also—and this is more urgent still—to cause the public generally to become acquainted with the real purposes underlying all that is now taking place.

Every member of the Order should be a very real messenger of the Lord wherever his duties may call him, and should embrace every opportunity to lecture, and to speak privately, on the deep spiritual significance of this great war.

Armed with various means of propaganda, but, above all, with the fruits of the study of our literature, members should become among the best defenders of their country, not only because their patriotism is as keen as that of others, but also because they are able to give of a strength coming to them from a knowledge of that which the immediate future has in store.

I would, therefore, urge members of the Star to redouble their efforts to bring into public view the great truths for which our Order stands, certain of a greater acceptance for them, now that the country has been brought into the swirl of a mighty shaking from above, than would have been possible with a country sunk in self-satisfied somnolence.

Of the special methods appropriate to the varying conditions of different localities each member must be a judge but I

venture to point out the strong need of making every effort to keep open a Star shop in London, such as we have at 290, Regent Street. Hundreds—almost thousands—have benefited from its existence, and it would be a shame to us all that the shop should cease just at the time when it must do most good. But we have no funds left, and we should need at least £500. To provide for a continuance of the shop's powers of propaganda such a sum would be well spent, even in the face of other demands upon our purses, for, with the help of those who have been devotedly working in it for so long, it has become a strong centre for the outpouring of uplifting forces.

I do not hesitate, therefore, to suggest that, apart from all other duties, each member has upon him the obligation to do what he can to give our shop another year's existence; and every little helps.

* * *

Mrs. Besant's visit to England this spring has been a magnificent success. Never before, so far as I am aware, has she accomplished so much within so brief a space of time, and we were continually in a state of breathless amazement at her power of passing from one momentous question to another with a rapidity and vigour of judgment making clear and unmistakable the course of action and policy which ought to be adopted. In fact, she surpassed even herself, and I look forward to her return in the spring of next year with a number of plans for the undertaking of much useful work in many directions.

She had four great activities during this visit : (1) her lectures on mysticism at the Queen's Hall, during five successive Sundays in May and June ; (2) her work in connection with the trades' dispute, the practical outcome of this being a direct contract with the men themselves for the building of the Theosophical Society headquarters ; (3) her pronouncement regarding the woman's movement ; and (4) her efforts in the direction of bringing about a better understanding of the Indian question in the minds of the British public. I do not wish, for a moment, to suggest that these activities occupied all her efforts. There was much touring, a magnificent lecture on the coming of the great World-Teacher, reported in the columns of the *Herald*, innumerable interviews, and many delicate questions to solve. But the four activities I have mentioned were, in my view, the special features of her 1914 work in Europe, and all of them will have far-reaching effects. Fortunately, the long drawn out case has ended triumphantly in her favour, and she is now at liberty to devote her attention to the consolidation and making permanent of all her various efforts in the direction of human progress. During the last two or three years she has been compelled to keep things just moving—so many special issues claiming, for the moment, her attention ; but now she is free, and I hope that we who are her followers will not become dizzy with all that is now likely to happen. Knowing her as well as I do, and having been permitted a glimpse into her marvellous methods of organisation, I expect great things shortly, and I know she has left here in Europe able lieutenants who will not allow the grass to grow under their feet. It is good to live when such a leader is at the helm ; it is better still to recognise the leader ; it is best of all to follow such a leader unwaveringly. In all that happens, may we follow loyally where we understand, and may we be content with suspending judgment—and still follow—where we do not.

* * *

The *New Statesman* has the following comment on Mrs. Besant's India speech :—

" Not for years has England heard so much plain good sense about our administra-

tion in India as Mrs. Besant put into her speech at the crowded meeting at the Queen's Hall last week, when Lord Brassey, (whose son-in-law is now governing Bombay) presided. In language impressive by its moderation, Mrs. Besant described the rapid progress now taking place in Indian thought, the unfortunate estrangement between the British officials and the educated classes, the arbitrary tyranny and partiality that mark the administration of the Press Law, the refusal of any effective representation to Indian opinion, and the way in which Indian educationists are snubbed and Indian aspirations repressed. Mrs. Besant gave instance after instance of what seemed to be very serious administrative grievances, for which no redress could be obtained. This powerful indictment of the whole spirit and working of the British administration—reproduced as it will be in every nationalist newspaper—will create a sensation in India. No Indian editor would have dared to print it as an editorial. It remains to be seen whether the Indian Government, which will hardly venture to prevent its reproduction in the great Bombay and Calcutta newspapers, will put in force the Press Law against the smaller ones. What the Indian Government ought to do is to make a reasoned reply, point by point, and justify the administration that it permits."

I was present at the lecture referred to, and I particularly noted the strong approval on the faces of the many leaders of Indian opinion who surrounded her on the platform. There is always much to be said on both sides in any question, but those who rule must look at the side of those who are ruled, and should leave their side of the question to the judgment of posterity.

* * *

The following cuttings speak for themselves ; I place them in the Starlight, as I imagine many readers will be glad to see them.

"THE NEXT STEPS IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS."

" Mrs. Besant, in opening the Conference held on the 18th, 19th, and 20th inst, at the University of London, to consider the subject of the next steps in educational

progress, contrasted the now passing conception of the child's mind as an empty vessel, into which it was the teacher's duty to pour as many facts as possible with the more modern idea that the aim of education should be to draw out from the child's mind, as from an El Dorado, its latent gold.

"Urged thereto, perhaps, by the natural tendency to preach moderation when enthusiasm for a new idea is running rife, Mrs. Besant had something to say in support of a theory of mental scaffolding, as exemplified in the Indian youth who is taught formula which he is not expected to understand, or, it might be added, in the English youth who grapples with dead languages as a discipline of the mind. There is much to support the idea that in something of the same way that we give a dog a bone to sharpen his teeth upon, or use gymnastic exercise to develop muscle, so the mind of the young should be stimulated by mental exercise, rather than left to wander along easy paths requiring no such effort.

"It would seem that there can be nothing to commend the Indian custom of placing a number of classes in one room, but in practice it develops a power of close concentration amid distractions which is of real value. No such mitigation attends the evil of the terrible overworking of childhood in the East, which has resulted in the growing up of a generation old before it is young, the strain in early youth being such that after the age of forty, when those of English birth show their greatest mental vigour, the brain cannot receive a new idea.

"'Schools for Mothers,' which many, including Mrs. Besant, would have established as a definite part of the educational scheme, is a popular cry nowadays; but the idea of the prospective mother surrounded not only by conditions of health, but also of beauty, is something which those who know her present environment can scarcely visualise.

"A strong plea for recognition of the fact that the whole adult life depends on the nourishing and development of the body during early years, that if this is neglected the nervous system risks chronic debility,

and that, where study and health clash, study must give way, led Mrs. Besant on to look forward to the day when Education, instead of being regarded as the step-child of the Legislature, would be honoured as the eldest son.

* * *

"Mrs. Besant, who spoke on 'The Method of Mental Growth,' did not diverge from the lines of conventional theory, and several of her remarks—*e.g.* that change of occupation is rest—are now platitudinous. She advocated the strengthening of attention and the cultivation of the power of observation during the first seven years of life, and would make the child commit to memory statements of facts which were not understood. This would induce an effort to understand later on, and would thus exercise the mind of the child. But there is danger that the young mind will form the habit of accepting formulas with no desire to verify them. In the second stage (years seven to fourteen) the lecturer recommended the teaching of relations—*e.g.* the tracing of such relationships as that which Darwin traced between the humble bee and field-mice. She would teach facts about geography and history, and cause poetry to be learnt; but though she urged the stimulation of the imagination, the only reason given for the learning of poetry was that it was easier than prose on account of the lines and rhymes. The memory rather than the imagination was emphasised. Yet one of the grave faults of education is its over-estimation of memory work. But there was excellent point in the remark, 'Make channels for right emotion before the emotion comes'; in this way, when the being is flooded with new feelings at puberty, the passages towards noble and self-sacrificing ideals are already formed. A trust in human nature too seldom seen among teachers was evinced by Mrs. Besant's belief that the young are more moved by the unselfish than the selfish, by the noble than the low. She urged the study during the critical years of life of all that evoked the reasoning powers; such subjects as logic, mathematics, and science were good. Only after the age of fourteen should there be any

specialisation. She wished young people to be convinced that 'all live by law in the mental and moral sphere as well as in the physical.'

The Athenæum.

* * *

"THEOSOPHY AND SOCIAL REFORM.

"Those unacquainted with the implications of theosophical teaching may probably, at first, fail to see any relation between theosophy and social reform. That theosophy, however, has a message which bears very distinctly upon our social problems, was made abundantly clear by Mrs. Besant in a lecture she gave last week, at Kensington Town Hall.

"Her argument turned principally upon the changing factor of individual character. Character, she said, goes deeper than politics and economics, and we shall never get rid of poverty until we strike at the root of human selfishness. There are three fundamental theosophical doctrines that bear directly upon the question of social organisation: (1) Universal brotherhood, (2) the teaching of Reincarnation, (3) the teaching of Karma.

"Brotherhood means that we cannot be content while others (our brothers and sisters) are in misery and poverty. The rightly organised civilised community should be modelled on the pattern of the family, where the strong bear the burdens of the weak. 'I am not fond of talking about rights for grown-up men and women,' Mrs. Besant continued; 'for them duty is the binding law of life, but the rights of children and animals ought everywhere to be recognised in any society which calls itself civilised. For it is the weak that have rights: the strong have duties.'

"A strong appeal was made for a more rational treatment of the congenital criminal class. From the standpoint of reincarnation, the less developed, intellectually and morally, are regarded as the younger souls. We should surround this particular class with refining influences, and have them looked after by the kindest and most patient people, who would give themselves to this

class of work. Prison life only makes criminals, it never cures them. Mrs. Besant's remedy would be the institution of labour colonies where they would be allowed as much liberty as possible, and where they would gradually regain self-respect and form habits of industry. For liberty, she declared (and the audience audibly assented) is not the best thing in the world until you have gained self-control—then it is priceless.

"The remarks on education were along the same lines and equally outspoken. 'The teacher who cannot keep discipline without the stick is not fit to be a teacher. Send him to break stones.' Learning should be a delight to the child, and would be were he allowed to develop along the lines of his own character. Every child that comes into the world should be given the opportunity to develop to the full all the qualities he possesses."

—The Christian Commonwealth.

* * *

"MRS. BESANT'S FAREWELL.

"Mrs. Besant sailed for India last Friday night. She expects to return in the spring. Before her departure she visited Tavistock Square, to bid farewell to the men engaged in the erection of the New Theosophical Headquarters. She was accompanied by Dr. Haden Guest, Miss Bright, Lady de la Warr, Lady Emily Lutyens, Mr. Lutyens, and others. The chief foreman read a speech of welcome, recalling Mrs. Besant's services to the cause of labour in the past, and thanking her for what she had done to secure the present work, promising that all concerned would do their best to ensure the success of the job. He then presented a bunch of flowers from the garden of one of the men. Mrs. Besant, in her reply, said that it was necessary that everyone concerned should realise how important was the piece of work on which they were engaged, having regard to the experimental conditions under which it was carried out. She believed that the present methods by which labour could be starved into accepting conditions it disapproved of were all wrong, and hoped that this piece of work, experiment as it was, would at least go to show the men that they must organise in guild or co-operative |

societies in order that labour might have the use of capital, and organise its own industry for the good of each other. In bidding the men good-bye, she expressed the hope that she would meet them all again in the spring. The men gave her three hearty cheers."

—*The Christian Commonwealth.*

* * *

The many readers of the *Herald* who know Dr. L. Haden Guest, and who have benefited from his articles on hygiene and school children, will join me in congratulating him and the Theosophical Society in England and Wales on his unanimous election as its general secretary for the ensuing year. Dr. Guest is one of our ablest and, at the same time, one of our most inspiring workers, and many of us have cause to be grateful to him for his kindness and sympathy. In addition, he is well-known as a lecturer of power and intellectual brilliancy, and I can't think of no one more fitted than he to occupy what I must call Mrs. Sharpe's chair. He has a great opportunity, during these next twelve months, to serve the Masters well, and all who know him know that at the end of his tenure of office he will have won the eager gratitude of his colleagues in office and of his fellow-members.

* * *

Writing of Dr. Guest brings to my memory a cutting from the *Leader*, an Indian newspaper, in which there is evidence of the effect Dr. Guest's articles are producing:—

"With a view to arrest the physical degeneration of the Parsi race an honorary staff of thirty-five doctors, including eight lady doctors, under the auspices of the Zoroastrian Conference, are examining all Parsi school children. The result of the examination of 1265 children showed that there were 194 cases of enlarged spleens, the effect of malaria, while there were 391 cases of defective eyesight. The proportion of children suffering from ear, throat, and nose diseases is very large, being about 50 per cent., but the percentage of the children with bad teeth is the largest. Out of 1503 students examined, some 898 were found suffering from bad teeth.

"The labours of the band of volunteer doctors are being heartily supported by the

trustees of the Wadia Charitable Fund who, in order to enable Parsi children to have the advantages of open air, have made a spacious garden, the Malcolm Bagh, available in the healthy Bombay suburb of Andheri, as a holiday resort for school children of the community."

* * *

I still receive letters dealing with my remarks as to the relation of our Order to the poor. An interesting note comes from Manchester:—

"Concerning Mr. Arundale's remarks in 'In the Starlight' of the June number of *The Herald of the Star*, about doing useful work among the poor, it may interest you to know that the Manchester members of 'The Servants of the Star' did a little to help in the work of relieving the distress of their less fortunate brothers and sisters by taking part in the house-to-house and street collections organised by the National Children's Home and Orphanage, 'for the rescue of children who through the vice, poverty, or death of their parents, are in danger of falling into criminal ways.' The institution is run on very broad lines, being absolutely non-sectarian in character, and all-inclusive in the scope of its sympathy, and is, therefore, thoroughly in accordance with the spirit of the 'Servants of the Star.' The Manchester 'Servants' succeeded in collecting £2 10s. 9d., which was very fair, considering the day of the street collection was very wet, and, therefore, prevented to a considerable extent, both the children from collecting and the people from passing along the streets, who otherwise might have given."

An Oxford member would be glad to offer financial assistance, on behalf of her fellow members, towards the work of the Friends of the Poor Holiday Fund mentioned in our June number. Perhaps the member who gave me information about the Fund will kindly let me have the name and address of the organiser of the Fund.

* * *

The Archbishop of Canterbury made the following instructive remarks at a meeting of the Charity Organisation Society, held on the 25th of May last:—

"Taking our Society as a whole, I think its value consists pre-eminently in its power

of bringing together two, not different, but somewhat distinct, forces—one the force of the voluntary independent worker, who is mainly thinking, not of the conditions of our common life, but of the helping of individuals both in growth of character and in the successful progress of their lives ; in fact, the person who is thinking of the individual and not of the conditions ; and secondly, those who are thinking far less about the individual in detail than about the conditions as a whole and the improvement of those conditions which, by legislative or other change, authorities are bringing about. Now, we want those two forces brought into touch in some way, and it is an extremely difficult process to know how to bring them into touch, because the origins of the two are different, the processes of the two are different, and the manner in which they work is different. You want something that is, so to speak, independent of both, that is neither State authority nor a mere emotional and keen and sympathetic individual dealing with it, but an independent organisation which has thought these problems out and is able to bring the two sides—the individual force of sympathy and the public force of authority and guidance and Government—wisely into touch with one another for producing the common result which emerges from the joint action of the two. That is what I should claim we have in these years been able to do for the common good in what I should call the social department of London's life. That we have been doing. We have tried to do it, but our efforts have depended greatly upon the excellence with which we have been manned or served or staffed."

The Order of the Star in the East, in its social aspect, would be wise to take these words to heart.

* * *

In *Man*, for June, Prof. J. Macmillan Brown announces the discovery of a new form of Pacific Ocean script in the little island of Oleai or Uleiai, one of the most westerly of the Caroline group. The chief, Egilimar, furnished a list of fifty-one characters, each of which represents a syllable. It has no connection with any other well-known alphabets, the only other script

known in the groups or islands of the Pacific being that of the Easter Island tablets, which are ideographic. The Oleai syllabic script is a stage further than these in the development of an alphabet. The script is at present known only to five men on the islet ; but it is probably a relic of a wide usage in the archipelago. A similar commercial script is that used in the island of Yap. This Oleai script is manifestly the product of long ages for the use of a highly organised community ; in other words, it must have belonged to the ruling class of an empire of some extent that needed constant record of the facts of intercourse and organisation.

* * *

"It is frequently a cause for great disappointment to teachers and others who genuinely seek to raise the children of the slums to a higher level of life," says the *Citizen*, of Letchworth, "to find how quickly some of the most promising deteriorate after leaving school. If the old apprenticeship system could be revived, many of the boys of the slums could begin to learn a trade immediately they left school ; but the attractions of comparatively big wages as van boys and in other employments, when a lad is of value to his master, but learns nothing of permanent value to himself, are generally irresistible. The result is that while in his teens he will receive good wages, but when he reaches young manhood and has outgrown his job, there is nothing else for him ; and as, meanwhile, he has learnt no trade, he drifts into the ranks of the casual labouring class—the most hopeless element in our population, and the main bulwark of slumdom."

* * *

In India, Mrs. Besant has been making many efforts to keep alive the ancient crafts and industries, but the apparent glories of an insignificant clerkship in a Government office turn away thousands of Indian youths from callings which, if followed, would do much to raise the prosperity of their mother-land. Mrs. Mann and the Brotherhood of Arts are no doubt alive to the importance of emphasising the ennobling effect of the pursuit of such trades as lend dignity and strength to a nation ; but it would be well

if much more care were taken by the school authorities to gain an effective influence over the youth entrusted to them so that wise and heeded guidance might be given to those who are about to leave school to enter the outside world. In my own experience, the boy or girl above all needs advice when about to withdraw from much of the protecting influence of school and college life, when about to choose a profession or career. It is then that the teacher might often be able to point out the value of occupations other than those superficially attractive to the youth who has no clearly marked capabilities, and the result would be increased efficiency and diminished competition.

* * *

More than once attention has been called to the omission of women from the New Year and Birthday Honours' list. The Women's Freedom League have now gone a step further by preparing an honours' list of their own, which has been sent to his Majesty and to the Prime Minister, with a letter pointing out that no more loyal and faithful workers can be found than many of the distinguished women named. The League urges that no further lists of Birthday or New Year Honours should be issued without recognition of the highest degree being conferred upon both sexes equally. Amongst those suggested for such

recognition as the Honours' list affords are Lady Henry Somerset and Mrs. Annie Besant for their Imperial services; Miss Margaret McMillan, Mrs. Sidney Webb, Miss Mary Macarthur, Mrs. Bramwell Booth, and Mrs. Barnett for their social services; "Olive Schreiner," Mrs. Flora Annie Steel, and Mrs. Alice Meynell for their literary work; Miss Ellen Terry, Miss Lena Ashwell, Miss Horniman, and Dr. Ethel Smyth are named for recognition as artists; and other famous and distinguished women who have rendered service to science, travel, education, and philanthropy appear on the list. Many of these women, doubtless, are well content to work without this particular "recognition," and ask only for the "wages of going on." But the Women's Freedom League has, nevertheless, done well to remind the nation that distinguished services are not rendered by one sex only.

The Rev. John Barron, one of our most earnest workers in Ireland, writes to me that he is in great need of Order of the Star in the East literature for free distribution, and would be very grateful if packets could be sent him. *Verb. sap.* I will send his address to any generous member who desires to send him either literature or the wherewithal to obtain it.

THE STAR IN THE EAST.

A DIAMOND scintillating silver-white;
A bayonet point that pierces thro'
the night—
A glimmer and a sheen—a tender glow,
A million soft reflections down below.

A blossom from the garlands hung on
high,
To grace the glowing wonders of the sky.
A pearly petal dropped by angel hand,
A melody of God's enchanted land.

The hope of something far beyond our ken;
The unseen hand that ministers to men;
Serene, undimmed, unchanged it shines above,
The herald of the Christ, the Lord of Love.

BRYAN KILLIKELLY,

IDEALS OF THE FUTURE.

VIII.—THE IDEAL OF SCIENCE.

SCIENCE, from the standpoint of the occultist, embraces a very much larger area than that recognised by the ordinary western scientist; for the occultist comprises in his field of observation all lives embodied in matter, and to him every atom of matter embodies a fragment of life. Nominally, the western scientist might claim the same area, but practically he restricts himself to the physical universe, and recognises no organs of observation beyond those of the physical senses, enlarged by such physical apparatus as the wit of man may compass, now and hereafter. Matter and physical matter are to him identical, whereas the occultist regards physical matter as but one type of matter, sub-physical and super-physical matter offering to him further fields of research. Hence, the Ideal of Science is complete knowledge of the manifested universe, of all worlds, sub-physical, physical, and super-physical, embraced in manifestation; it recognises one life, embodied in endless forms, and comprises in its field of investigation all those innumerable lives.

Necessarily, then, it cannot be limited, for its organs of perception, to the five physical senses which are all that the average man possesses at this stage of his evolution. Regarding man as an unfolding life, it sees in his five senses five avenues opened through dense physical matter for the use of his power of perception—a faculty of his life. This living faculty of "awareness"—awareness of things external to himself—has hewn out for itself five channels through which it can contact these external things, and thus enable the man to know them through the modifications in his consciousness caused by their impacts. The sense-organs are "pierced outwards," in the graphic phrase

of an Upanishat, and the Self, the living spirit, is the piercer. The occultist regards each of these avenues as hewn out through a particular state of matter: smell in relation to solids, taste to liquids, sight to fire, touch to air, sound to ether; recognising two further states of matter within the limits of the physical, he expects the evolution of two further sense-organs, correlated to these, to be formed, as the others were formed, by the will to exercise the perceptive faculty in and through these states of matter.

Science, to the occultist as to the western scientist, is systematised knowledge, obtained by observation through the senses, and systematised by the working of the mind on the observations thus obtained. The occultist observes external objects, accumulates observations, compares and classifies them, formulates a hypotheses, submits it to experiment and re-experiment, and finally accepts the law of nature thus discovered. His method is identical in kind with that of the western scientist, though more extended in scope, and he is as rigid in his investigations as the most patient and accurate of western experimentalists. But he realises that for researches in each type of matter there must be sense-organs formed of the particular type which it is desired to investigate; for though the faculty of perception is a power of consciousness, of life, and is one faculty in all worlds, the sense-organs through which it is exercised must be adapted to any particular world in which investigation is to be carried on; matter which does not affect the physical sense-organs can only be investigated by sense-organs formed of itself and therefore responsive to its vibrations. The occultist finds within man's "body" matter of all types, and each type is continuous through-

out. (Not continuous in the sense of *contact* between particles, but in *relations* between particles, whereby they mutually affect each other, thus a continuum.) Each type of matter thus forms a sheath, where through consciousness may work on matter of the same type external to the body, and thus become aware of it, and draw it within the circle of knowledge. Hence, the method of the occultist can be the same as that of the western scientist, but is extended to all worlds related to his body, *i.e.* to all worlds of the types of matter included in his body. Where they differ, is in the knowledge of the occultist that it is not necessary to await the slow processes of evolution in the development of the sheaths of matter composing his body, but that he can develop these as surely as the gardener can develop a new flower, applying to particular specimens the knowledge gained by observation of natural laws, eliminating all obstacles,

utilizing all favourable conditions, and thus, by working with Nature, obtain in a few years the result that she may arrive at after millennia. Where the extension of the sense-organs by external apparatus finds its limits, the occultist shapes new sense-organs in the next type of matter in his own *body*, and thus continues his investigations into worlds at the threshold of which the western scientist has stopped for lack of means of further research.

This difference, however, is not fundamental, for the western scientist will be ready to adopt methods of self-evolution as soon as he is convinced—or even sees a reasonable probability—that such self-evolution is possible. Hence, the Ideal of Science is the same for both the occultist and the western scientist—the conquest of the realm of the knowable by observations systematised into science.

ANNIE BESANT, P.T.S.

“LOVE AND DESIRE.”

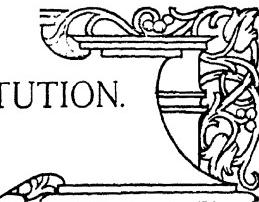
Love is queen of all,
The essence and the fire ;
She sings her madrigal
In all shapes of desire.
She stirs the mollusc-shell,
Sways Neptune in his place ;
The purged souls of hell
She leads again to grace.
Love is queen of all,
The essence and the fire ;
She sings her madrigal
In all shapes of desire.

Corpse on carvéd bier,
Young bride altar-led,
Ye are both drawn near
That which ye would wed.
Beauteous is the flame
With which ye are consumed,

Though of alien name
One be ebon-plumed.
Love is queen of all,
The essence and the fire ;
She sings her madrigal
In all shapes of desire.

Man she fashionéd
From the dead sphere's dross ;
Greatest, he who bled
On Ignorance's cross.
Legion is her name,
Unity her law ;
Leaps her chastest flame
Where life is free from flaw.
Love is queen of all,
The essence and the fire ;
She sings her madrigal
In all shapes of desire.

—G. R. GILLETT.



THE PROBLEM OF DESTITUTION.

LECTURE III.

WHAT IS THE REMEDY? THE FAILURE OF THE POOR LAW AND OF CHARITY
THE POLICY OF "THE NATIONAL MINIMUM."



LEAVE me ask you first to carry your minds back to the previous lectures, and recall what I said as to the wide extent of the evils of poverty and of destitution. We have, in this country, two direct ways of coping with these evils, both of which, as I shall attempt to show you very briefly, are almost complete failures. The first of these is the Poor Law. The Poor Law breaks down simply for this reason—that it sets about its task of dealing with destitution—this great social disease affecting millions of men, women and children—on the principle of attempting to relieve it instead of going to the root of the evil by preventing its occurrence. That is a perfectly hopeless task; and it is a perfectly unscientific task. It is simply putting a plaster on a festering sore. The Workhouse, with its deterrent methods and degrading influences, cannot make any serious attempt to cure or reform the character of any of its inmates. You know the common hatred of the Workhouse among the poor—a hatred which is ignored or denied by a good many Poor Law Guardians and officials. If it were really the beneficent institution which they would have us believe, do you think it likely that there would be this universal feeling about the Workhouse amongst the people who are in danger of entering its doors? Take the other principal method of the Poor Law—the method of relieving destitution by doles of out-door relief. The out-relief given by the Poor Law Guardians to-day is an absurd

farce. Some of them are giving old people 3s. a week, out of which 2s. 6d. has to be paid in rent alone. Some are allowing 1s. 6d, or even 1s. a week, to destitute mothers, on which to maintain their children.

Now, let me give you one example which will show the utter failure of the Poor Law, and why it must always be a failure (unless, indeed, you alter the principle on which it is based, when it will cease to be a Poor Law). Guardians, as you know, are not allowed by law to relieve a person until he is destitute; they can take no effective steps to prevent him from falling into a state of destitution; they must wait until it is generally too late to do anything effective. Go into a Poor Law Infirmary—into the consumptive ward, say—and ask the nurses about the condition of their unfortunate patients. You will be told that few of them are likely to recover; they do not come in in the early stages of the disease; they come to the workhouse to die. I do not say that this is entirely the fault of the Guardians; it is due to the principle on which the Poor Law is run. It is not the Guardians' business to encourage the sick to come to the Infirmary for treatment in the incipient stages of their disease; but, rather, to keep them away as long as possible. And the consequence is that you have this great Poor Law Medical Service, dealing as it does with vast numbers of the sick, violating the elementary canons of a sound Public Health administration. Well, there is the Poor Law, with its 650 Boards of Guardians, and its army of officials, on which the nation spends £18,000,000 a year. An

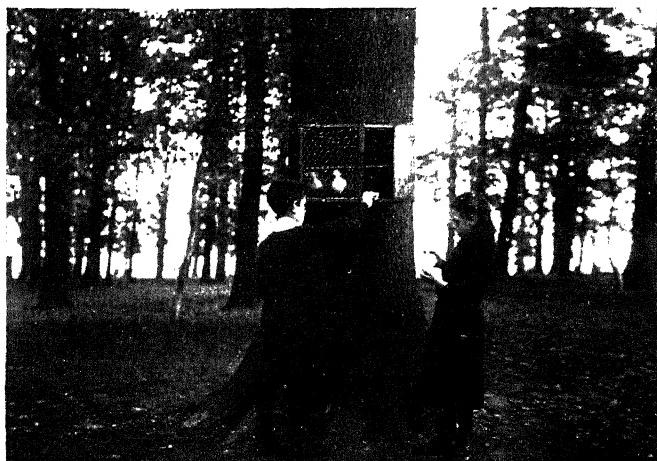
destitution is still rampant in every quarter of the Kingdom.

Let me now take the other great agency which tries to cope with destitution—I mean charity. Now, I do not wish to belittle the motives of the charitable. I recognise quite clearly that the good-will and human love which are driving tens of thousands of men and women to the giving of alms or the administering of charities is something of great value. But the pity of it is that so much of it is wasted, because this gigantic organisation of public and private philanthropy is all attempting the same task that the Poor Law attempts so unsuccessfully—the task of relieving destitution instead of preventing it. Often charity is not merely unsuccessful, but actually pernicious, since it helps, unfortunately, to perpetuate the very evils which it is designed to cure. What real good are you doing by giving nightly bowls of soup to crowds of homeless out-of-works? You are certainly not helping them to find employment; you may be even deterring them from taking the trouble to

look for it. Charity might be satisfactory if destitution were occasional, or confined to individuals here and there; but it is obvious that for so wide-spread and chronic a disease it must be a failure. Now, all this is at last being dimly recognised. During the past few years we have had the growth of what is called “the social conscience,” an uncomfortable feeling that poverty is radically wrong, and a feeling, too, that the organised charities and the Poor Law have somehow been a failure. We have begun to recognise that the community—the State—must take the business in hand, and that the only sound principle on which to proceed is that enunciated so clearly in the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission—the principle of prevention, and not relief, of destitution. We are recognising, too, that this destitution is not, as our fathers and grandfathers used to think, and as possibly some think to-day, due in the main to personal causes, to private wickedness in individual men or women. I do not say, for a moment, if you go round a Workhouse and examine the inmates, you



FEEDING L.C.C. SCHOOL CHILDREN.



FEEDING DOVES. OPEN AIR SCHOOL, SHOOTER'S HILL.

will find that they are all sober and steady characters. But I do say it is folly to argue that, if they are not sober or steady, the destitution from which they are suffering is their own fault, and that we are therefore absolved from doing anything at all in the matter. Even if we knew that the cause of every individual's misery was his own weakness or vice (which, emphatically, we do not know), it would be our duty to try and sweep away this mass of destitution for our own sakes. For it is affecting the soundness of the whole body politic.

Well, now, the social conscience has awakened, and we have had a number of reforms in various directions. We have had the feeding of the school children and the medical treatment of the school children. We have had Trade Boards set up to combat the sweating evil in some of the worst-paid industries, in which women are largely employed. We have had a number of aged people taken out of the Poor Law by Old Age Pensions. We have had the problem of sickness tackled by the Insurance Act, and we have had measures directed against unemployment—a national system of Labour Exchanges, and, again, insurance against unemployment in certain industries.

Now, all these measures, I believe, have a sound underlying principle—that is to say,

they are trying to prevent people from falling into destitution instead of merely palliating their misery. At the same time, they are "old wine in new bottles," because their promoters, and many of those who are attempting to carry them out, have not got any clear agreement in their minds what it is they are driving at. And the result, naturally, is that a good deal of bungling occurs. Let me give you an instance of what I mean. There are people

to-day who are consistently obstructing the proper organisation of the medical treatment of the school children, on the ground that it is a derogation of parental responsibility. That is a view which I do not think anyone who has spent any time in the schools can possibly share. As a matter of fact, the treatment of the children in School Clinics has had the effect of bringing nurses, doctors, teachers, and parents (all those who are most interested in the child's welfare) into much closer relationship. I say that the working of the system has vastly increased the sense of parental responsibility. Another argument which is constantly brought forward against the imposing of a minimum wage in certain trades, is the argument that you must be careful how you interfere to raise wages unduly, because if you attempt to raise them too high the trade will not be able to bear it, and the remedy will be worse than the disease.

Of course, there is an economic law which prevents your raising wages beyond a certain limit, but to pretend that that limit is reached when you have given 10s. to a woman for a week's work of sixty hours is ludicrous. Or, if indeed there are trades which can only be carried on on such terms, then the sooner they disappear the

better. A civilised society has no place for such brutalities.

Now, what are we to do? First of all, we have got to recognise (I am pleased to think we have already begun to recognise it) the root principle of "prevention rather than cure." But that does not in itself imply any simple plan which will put everything right. There is no royal road to universal peace and contentment. The problem is complicated, and it will require courage and patience to solve it. All I can do here is to outline to you the policy of the National Minimum, as it is called. What does that policy mean? It means that it shall be the duty of the community to ensure to all its members a certain decent standard of living, and that that standard shall be ensured in four ways: by the setting up of (1) a minimum of wages, (2) a minimum of leisure, (3) a minimum of health, and (4) a minimum of education, physical and mental, below which no citizen should be allowed to fall. Let me deal with these for a few moments separately.

First of all, as regards the minimum wage—I need not argue the supreme necessity of this for the physical and moral health of the people. The only question is as to its possibility. Well, it is practically universal in Australia and New Zealand. See what has been done in Victoria. There, since 1896, there have been Wages Boards, which cover almost every industry. Wages have risen enormously, and there is no destitution in the country. Nor, be it noted, has any trade been ruined as a result; on the contrary, every one has gone steadily forward in prosperity. At home we have begun at last to follow the lead of the Australian States, and Trade Boards have been set up to abolish sweating in the cardboard box, chain making, tailoring, lace finishing, confectionery, hollow-ware, and shirt-making trades. As yet, it is true, wages have not been brought up in these trades to a satisfactory level; but an enormous amount has been gained. The wretched slaves of Cradley Heath, for instance, who used to toil all the week for



OPEN AIR SCHOOL—BASKETWORK—SHOOTER'S HILL.

a bare pittance of 6s. 6d. to 7s. (with 2s. 6d. deducted for forge and fuel), now find themselves 100, and even 150, per cent. better off. They are earning to-day 11s. and 12s. Presently, we may hope, the community will be as shocked at this wage as it is now pleased, and we shall see the 12s. doubled. For the moment, what we have to do is to press for the extension of the Trade Boards Act to other low-paid industries (there are scores of them where it is badly needed), and, at the same time, to encourage the raising of wages by Government and all Public Authorities, as well as in private employment through Trade Union action.

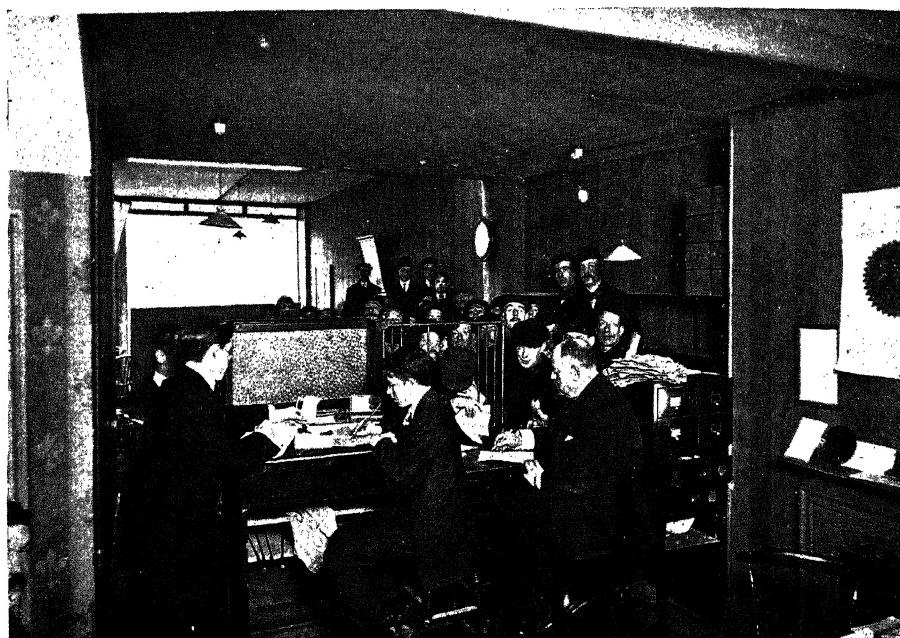
As to the second minimum—the Minimum of Leisure—this, too, is vitally important. An incalculable amount of sickness, ignorance, vice, and misery in general, are due to overwork. Why should we not aim at an eight-hour day? It is not possible now to go into details, but again I would refer you to the example of Victoria, where the Wages' Boards have been extended to the regulation of hours of work. In some trades it would be possible—and desirable—to prohibit by law the employment of any person for more than a certain number of hours. Especially in the case of juvenile labour is this necessary. The other day a Committee, appointed by the Home Secretary to inquire into the hours of Vanboys, issued its Report, and recommended that Local Authorities should have the power of limiting the labour of lads between sixteen and eighteen to seventy hours a week, with $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours per day off for meals. Seventy hours a week for boys of sixteen! I suggest to you that we should limit the hours of these boys to thirty (if not twenty-four), and ensure that for the other half of their working day they should be continuing their education.

Thirdly, there is the Minimum of Health. You know that our public health system is very unsatisfactory, despite the Insurance Act. The rich can get treatment, but not the poor. The miserable botching of the Poor Law medical service I have already spoken of. The public hospitals are lamentably few—far below the requirements of the nation. It is no exaggeration to say that

tens of thousands of people are suffering—and thousands are dying every week—unnecessarily, simply because there is no proper treatment available for them in their need. As to that important part of the public health, which falls within the four corners of what is called the “Housing Problem,” everyone knows what can be done—and what ought to be done, without delay. There is no sound reason why every slum area in the Kingdom should not be cleared out within the next five years, to make room for wholesome dwellings and parks and gardens.

Lastly, we must see to it that every child shall secure its share of education, not only literary and technical, important as that is, but physical also. We want School Clinics in every district; we want swimming and shower baths; we want “open air schools” for the delicate, and better playgrounds for the strong. Why should we not try to realise Plato's ideal—that the children of the nation should “dwell in a land of health amid fair sights and sounds, where beauty, that is born of fair works, will come upon them like a breeze and insensibly draw their minds, even in childhood, into a love of the highest things?”

There remains one pressing evil for which I have not indicated a remedy—I mean unemployment. Unfortunately, I have not the time to deal with this adequately tonight. But I would remind you that some of the measures which I have referred to—the reduction of the hours of labour in certain industries (*e.g.* on the railways), the abolition of the sweating of women and the overwork of the hundreds of thousands of boys and girls under eighteen—will do much to help the solution of this problem. Then through the Labour Exchanges you can, if you will, get rid of the evil of casual labour, with all the unemployment and the appalling misery that I have already described. You can organise the seasonal trades, so as to prevent most, if not all, of the unemployment that occurs there; and, by a wiser regulation of their work (of which, be it remembered, there is an enormous volume every year) the Government and the Local Authorities could quite easily forearm us



APPLYING FOR WORK AT ISLINGTON LABOUR EXCHANGE.

against those great trade depressions which, at regularly recurring periods, pinch the whole nation so hard.

Do you think that all these proposals are, as some critics urge, likely to damage the character of the poor? I put it to you that they are more likely to build up character than to destroy it. They are means to free the individual; to give him liberty and energy to develop his personality. It is our present system of doles and penalties, whether public or private, of leaving the slum-dweller to rot in his hovel, the destitute widow to sell herself to the sweater for a penny an hour, the aged workman to pass his last years in the gloom of the workhouse—it is all this, I say, which is the real danger to human liberty. And so I, for my part, look with nothing but hope to the enforcement by the community of this minimum of civilised life. Yet I wish to conclude on a note of warning; for, alas! it is easier to abolish destitution than to abolish poverty. Even if you can ensure a healthy com-

munity, living in clean houses, getting at least enough to eat, and some decent measure of rest and recreation—a community, if you like, with a minimum wage of 30s. a week—even then you will not have got rid of poverty.

For poverty, as I said at the outset, is a relative term. And the condition of millions of your people will still be one of unsatisfied wants. The wants will not be the less real because they are on a higher plane than the merely material, because there will be the craving for freedom, for knowledge, for equality. Even as it is, vast sections of the working-class—men and women whom we are too accustomed to regard as sufficiently well provided for—spend their lives in repressing aspirations. Look at all these parents who, in the struggle for existence, have to take their children from school at fourteen, though they desire to give them what is called a better education, to send them to the secondary school, to the University. Look at the weary town-dwellers

who want holidays, who long to see the country or the sea. Look at the men who are in bitter revolt against the conditions of their daily work—work without responsibility or initiative, work for a master, work which reduces them to mere automata, cogs in the gigantic soulless machinery of profit-making!

The sting of poverty is not only in the empty stomach or the ragged coat. It is far more in the sense of injustice that embitters men's hearts when they look across the gulf, and see the rich misusing in idle and selfish luxury the wealth that should have gone to make beauty and knowledge and honourable

social service the common heritage of all.

If you want a society where there is real freedom and real equality, I, personally, do not believe you can get it under our *régime* of Capitalism, with a base commercial ideal dominating us all. I believe that great and fundamental changes are necessary in the organisation of society; but it is not my business here to expound Socialism to you. I do ask you, though, as believers in a high and spiritual ideal, to realise that the poor, too, have ideals which will not be satisfied with "bread and circuses"—which, indeed, will never be satisfied in a society whose god is Mammon.

W. C. M. LLOYD.

AT EVENTIDE.

A WAY in a far country lies a great forest. Its paths are many and scattered, but they all lead to a White Palace, around which is a garden, where those who serve the King gather together at eventide to await His royal commands.

Many offices are filled by His servants; some are warriors and knights, others are shepherds or gardeners, some painters and musicians, while others are scientists. Each has his own special work to carry out for the King, and no one task is greater or less than another. Often it is necessary for the shepherd to become the warrior, the gardener the knight; for to serve Him truly through many lives, experience of every kind is needed.

I watched the pilgrims returning along their several paths, from north, south, east, and west.

Slowly, one by one, they passed through a tall gateway in the heart of the forest, over which was written:—

"Service, Self-sacrifice, Stedfastness."

When the last had entered and the portal was closed, there fell a deep silence: all knelt in reverent love, for the King stood among them.

His face was unmistakably that of a Prince, yet also that of a Priest, Warrior, Poet, Artist, Musician, Philosopher, Statesman—a Genius—and filled with a divine tenderness and compassion that no words can describe.

* * *

And now the ceremony began.

The pilgrims, clad in robes of white, passed up to the King, one by one, in turn, kneeling before Him; merged for the moment in the radiant Light, the Strength, that emanated from the Master, which He bestowed on each, for the fulfilment of His Work.

Then it was as though this dazzling Light, which had enfolded every pilgrim, became centred into one great glowing Ray, which shone forth from Him like a sun.

And I saw the Mystic Path of Light, the procession of pilgrims with their celestial Guide. Censers swung to and fro, while angelic choirs poured forth an ecstasy of music, and holy, unseen Presences mingled in the great luminous Way.

Truly, all ceremonies on the physical plane are but workings in loftier worlds, veiled by the Great Ones out of compassion for our feeble sight, in material garments. Is not much of the Catholic Church's teaching, especially as to the Blessed Sacrament, but this? May it not be that it is the Spirit within Who has seen and understood these higher workings, Who creates in us our deep devotion to the Real Presence dwelling on the Altar?

A faint light gleamed in the east. Slowly the radiant procession reached the gateway, which opened before them. Filled with the Master's Power, the pilgrims passed on their several ways, for the accomplishing of His Work.

P. V. C.

MEETING OF LONDON MEMBERS.

A MEETING of the London members of the Star was held in the Temporary Hall, Tavistock Square, on Monday, August 17th, at 7 p.m., the National Representative presiding. In spite of the fact that so many members are out of town at this season, the hall was nearly full.

The meeting was opened by Lady Emily Lutyens, who said :—

"Friends,—I am glad to see so many of our members here to-night, to discuss what should be our attitude as Star members, in the present crisis.

In the midst of the apparent disaster which has overwhelmed Europe, it is well for us, I think, to try and see what points of comfort and of hope may be gathered out of the darkness—for there are many. We may divide them under two headings ; firstly, those which apply to all people ; secondly, those which apply more particularly to members of the Order.

Under the first heading, the great outstanding good of this terrible war is the spirit of service which has been everywhere evoked, and it promises well for the future that there are so many, in all countries, ready to come forward and give help in the place and in the way that is most needed. The Nations have responded to the call for service as eagerly as to the call for arms, and for this spirit we may be deeply thankful.

The second point of special interest is to note how the war has reconciled many apparently irreconcilable forces. He would have been, indeed, regarded as a madman who had dared, a few weeks ago, to prophecy that in the space of a few days we should see Sir Edward Carson and Mr. Redmond pledging their followers to stand shoulder to shoulder in defence of England ; Mr. Lloyd George consulting Mr. Austin Chamberlain as to the best method of settling the country's finances ; Mr. McKenna and the Suffragettes calling a truce ; Lord Kitchener with a seat in a Liberal Cabinet ; and the nation as one man striving to find the way to attain the greatest good of the greatest number. This spirit of reconciliation has been no less remarkable in

other countries. In Belgium, for instance, where the Clericals and Liberal-Socialists are even more bitterly opposed to each other than our own political parties, the Clericals have invited the leader of the Socialist party to assist them in carrying on the government in this hour of the country's need. Is it not piteous that it needed a European war to make such co-operation possible, and that the passion of destruction is more inspiring than the passion for human uplifting ? But it is something to know that such combinations have been found possible, and in the days to come, when great schemes of social reconstruction are being considered, let us see to it that peace becomes as great a reconciler as war.

We have also seen in this great crisis, when for a moment the veil of convention and triviality has been dropped, how the essential divinity of man's nature shines forth. Qualities unsuspected in the ordinary individual manifest themselves, and the commonplace person becomes almost heroic, because for once the *true* man is allowed to appear. All these points would be matters of rejoicing even if we had no special belief in the coming of a World-Teacher, but for us who look at all events from that standpoint, there are signs of special significance and interest in this world conflict.

For those who believe in prophecies, and look to see them literally fulfilled, the present tribulation corresponds very nearly to Christ's prophecy as to the conditions which should herald His coming : ' When ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified ; for these things must first come to pass . . . Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom . . . and there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars ; and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity . . . men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth . . . And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.' (Luke, xxi.)

A matter of great significance is the fact that, even the ordinary journals, in

commenting on the war, are almost unanimous in declaring that whatever be the outcome, we shall never see the same Europe again. As one journal put it : 'Ancient history closed at midnight of July 31st, 1914.' Our civilisation has been shattered to its foundations. A leading article in the *Daily Mail* used this very significant phrase : 'We are witnessing another twilight of the Gods!' Did the writer, I wonder, understand himself the full meaning of his phrase—that the death of the old gods is only the prelude to the birth of the new ; the twilight which ever precedes the dawn. As Carlyle says of that magnificent conception of our old Norse forefathers : 'That is also a very striking conception, that of Ragnarök, consummation or twilight of the Gods—seemingly a very old prophetic idea. The Gods and Jötuns, the Divine powers and chaotic brute ones, meet at last in universal world embracing wrestle and duel : world-serpent against Thor, strength against strength ; mutually destructive ; and how twilight sinking into darkness swallows the created universe. The old universe, with its gods is sunk—but it is not final death ; there is to be a new Heaven and a new Earth. Curious, this law of mutation, which also is a law written in man's immost thought, had been deciphered by these old earnest thinkers in their rude style, and how though all dies, and even Gods die, yet all death is but a Phoenix fire death, and new birth into the greater and the better! It is the fundamental Law of Being for a creature made of time, living in this place of Hope.'

The way is being prepared for the Great Teacher with a rapidity that surpasses our greatest expectations. The outcome of this war must inevitably be the shattering of many forms which are outworn, that the spirit of life may have fuller play. The world to which the great Peace-maker will speak will be a world new-born through pain and suffering, a world which has witnessed the failure of a civilisation based on materialism, and which will be far more ready after the chastening hand of God has been laid upon it, to listen to the voice of One speaking with the authority of the Spirit. It will be a humbler, sweeter, gentler world to which the Great Teacher will speak His message

than could have been possible without—a catastrophe of this magnitude.

Then, I would ask you to note the swiftness with which the nations have hastened to destruction. We, who have been privileged to know a little of the great Plan, have seen in the universal unrest, which has been increasing all over the world, a sign of the pressure from higher planes and of the great force which is gathering for the coming of the World-Teacher. Many of us have individually suffered from this pressure, from the feeling that we were caught up in a whirlpool and could not find our feet. I think this has been the merciful testing of our strength, so that when the pressure increased and caused a world-wide upheaval—such as that which we are witnessing at the present time—we might have regained our balance. In the days to come, we who are members of this Order must stand firm with calm and unflinching courage, ready to help, to sympathise, and even to fight, but never losing sight of the fact 'that the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ,' and all things are working to an appointed end.

How can we, as members of this Order, best use our opportunities of advancing the work of preparation which is going on around us on so vast a scale. We can, of course, all of us throw our strength in to helping our country at the place where she needs us most. Those who are free to do so, can offer themselves to fight, carrying into the battle all the passionate love of country and what that may mean as an inspiring force, without the corresponding hatred of the enemy which too often accompanies it.

For the rest, let us find out the weakest places in our army of service and throw our strength into these. Let us always remember, however, that it is a great world-drama which is being enacted before our eyes, and this is only the first act, the prologue, which is preparing the stage for the appearance of the Chief Actor. We, as members of this Order, must never lose sight of the fact that our chief purpose in life is to prepare the way for the Great Teacher, and to serve Him when He shall come ; and, therefore, while we may do all that is possible to help in Act No. 1, we should be straining every

nerve and muscle to understand how we can best make ready for Act No. 2. Surely it is at a moment like this when the spirit of Brotherhood is abroad, when our present civilisation is falling in ruins around us, that we should be thinking and planning for the future, that we may build a better and a nobler civilisation, more in the spirit of the great Lord for whose advent we prepare. So I have asked Dr. Guest to come to you this evening and outline a scheme which he is preparing for such a social reconstruction."

Unfortunately, no notes were taken of Dr. Guest's speech, and pressure of work makes it impossible for him to write it again. He emphasised the fact that it must be *now* or never that we must start our schemes for social reconstruction, as if we waited till peace came we ran the risk of dropping back into our old attitude of mind. After touching upon some of the monstrous conditions of our present civilisation, he said that he proposed sending the following letter to influential men and women connected with movements for social progress:

RECONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE.

The shock of the war has made vivid and actual in the minds of us all the need to translate into practice the essential truth of our equal part in the national life, in face of which difference and degree are secondary, and common human sympathies and interests of primary importance. The universal desire to be of service is the most obvious result of this realization. But there is a further result even more significant. On all hands we find the conviction that we are outgrowing the narrower ideals which have hitherto sufficed, and that our national life, and our international relations, need to be based on wider ideals. How to change our social conditions, our politics, our economic organization, so that the nations shall not drift into war in the future, how to change the relation of nation and nation, so that an agreed unity of purpose shall leave no place for armed hostilities; these are matters to which the mind of the nation should now be turned.

We suggest that an organized expression should be given to some definite conclusions, that the body expressing these should be representative of all organizations which have at heart the good of mankind in whatever way they work. If a reconstruction of our civilization is to be planned, and a new polity for Europe outlined, based on the recognition of a new code of social ethics, the work must be begun now. Each one in the nation is now aware that he has a part in the greater consciousness of the nation, that social and national duties are not remote abstractions but insistent realities of everyday. And while the light on this expansion of our conceptions and of our spiritual life is clear and undimmed, we should begin the consideration of the rebuilding that is to be undertaken. The

method of deliberation might well take the form of a meeting of men and women, representing the organizations summoned to the conference, who should discuss general proposals and elaborate definite practical plans. Are you willing to join in forming a preliminary and provisional committee to issue the invitation to the Conference and to draw up a programme? International as well as national reconstruction should be considered, for we are now in a position to reach upward from our clear recognition of nationality to what may become an attainable project of the realization of our international unity.

All organizations, whose objects transcend the personal, should be invited, and it is not only an occasion for a meeting of brotherhoods, but of the fraternities of science, art and literature. The organizations invited should be drawn not only from this country but from those European countries with whom we are allied, from India and the East, and later, after the war, from those countries now our military enemies.

This scheme, if carried out, would involve considerable expenditure, and he was, therefore, opening a fund for the purpose, and an entirely separate staff would be employed.

The National Representative invited the co-operation of members in this scheme, and suggested that a collection should be taken at the close of the meeting, and handed to Dr. Guest as a first instalment.

A discussion then followed as to what practical help could be given. It was desired by about fifteen members that a weekly meeting should be held at Tavistock Square for meditation, and the discussion of Dr. Guest's scheme. Mr. Pearce kindly made himself responsible for the organisation of this meeting, and it was agreed to hold it every Monday at 7 p.m. Miss Villiers said she was organising a sewing party at the shop, and the garments made would be distributed amongst the very poor.

Lady Downes said she was arranging a weekly meeting at her own house, for poor Austrian and German women who were left in this country in a friendless condition, and she invited members who were willing to do so, to come and cheer these unfortunate women.

Mrs. Herbert Whyte made herself responsible for taking the names of those who were willing to give secretarial help in connection with Dr. Guest's scheme.

The collection, which amounted to £5 10s., was handed over to Dr. Guest, and a further sum of nearly £2 was given to Miss Villiers to buy material.

TO MEN AND WOMEN OF GOODWILL IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

A MESSAGE FROM THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

WE find ourselves to-day in the midst of what may prove to be the fiercest conflict in the history of the human race. Whatever may be our view of the processes which have led to its inception, we have now to face the fact that war is proceeding upon a terrific scale, and that our own country is involved in it.

We recognise that our Government has made most strenuous efforts to preserve peace, and has entered into the war under a grave sense of duty to a smaller State, towards which we had moral and treaty obligations. While, as a Society, we stand firmly to the belief that the method of force is no solution of any question, we hold that the present moment is not one for criticism, but for devoted service to our nation.

What is to be the attitude of Christian men and women and of all who believe in the brotherhood of humanity? In the distress and perplexity of this new situation, many are so stunned as scarcely to be able to discern the path of duty. In the sight of God we should seek to get back to first principles, and to determine on a course of action which shall prove us to be worthy citizens of His Kingdom. In making this effort, let us remember those groups of men and women, in all the other nations concerned, who will be animated by a similar spirit, and who believe with us that the fundamental unity of men in the family of God is the one enduring reality, even when we are forced into an apparent denial of it.

Although it would be premature to make any pronouncement upon many aspects of the situation on which we have no sufficient data for a reliable judgment, we can, and do, call ourselves and you to a consideration of certain principles which may safely be enunciated.

1.—The conditions which have made this catastrophe possible must be regarded by us as essentially unchristian. This war spells the bankruptcy of much that we too lightly call Christian. No nation, no Church, no individual can be wholly

exonerated. We have all participated to some extent in these conditions. We have been content, or too little discontented, with them. If we apportion blame, let us not fail first to blame ourselves, and to seek the forgiveness of Almighty God.

2.—In the hour of darkest night it is not for us to lose heart. Never was there greater need for men of faith. To many will come the temptation to deny God, and to turn away with despair from the Christianity which seems to be identified with bloodshed on so gigantic a scale. Christ is crucified afresh to-day. If some forsake Him and flee, let it be more clear that there are others who take their stand with Him, come what may.

3.—This we may do by continuing to show the spirit of love to all. For those whose conscience forbids them to take up arms there are other ways of serving, and definite plans are already being made to enable them to take their full share in helping their country at this crisis. In pity and helpfulness towards the suffering and stricken in our own country we shall all share. If we stop at this, "what do we more than others?" Our Master bids us pray for and love our enemies. May we be saved from forgetting that they, too, are the children of our Father. May we think of them with love and pity. May we banish thoughts of bitterness, harsh judgments, and revengeful spirit. To do this is in no sense unpatriotic. We may find ourselves the subjects of misunderstanding. But our duty is clear—to be courageous in the cause of love and in the hate of hate. May we prepare ourselves even now for the day when once more we shall stand shoulder to shoulder with those with whom we are now at war, in seeking to bring in the Kingdom of God.

4.—It is not too soon to begin to think out the new situation which will arise at the close of the war. We are being compelled to face the fact that the human

race has been guilty of a gigantic folly. We have built up a culture, a civilisation, and even a religious life, surpassing in many respects that of any previous age, and we have been content to rest it all upon a foundation of sand. Such a state of society cannot endure so long as the last word in human affairs is brute force. Sooner or later it was bound to crumble. At the close of this war we shall be faced with a stupendous task of reconstruction. In some ways it will be rendered supremely difficult by the legacy of ill-will, by the destruction of human life, by the tax upon all in meeting the barest wants of the millions who will have suffered through the war. But in other ways it will be easier. We shall be able to make a new start, and to make it all together. From this point of view we may even see a ground of comfort in the fact that our own nation is involved. No country will be in a position which will compel others to struggle again to achieve the inflated standard of military power existing before the war. We shall have an opportunity of reconstructing European culture upon the only possible permanent foundation—mutual trust and goodwill. Such a reconstruction would not only secure the future of European civilisation, but would save the world from the threatened catastrophe of seeing the great nations of the East building their new social order also upon the sand, and thus turning the thought and wealth needed for their education and development into that which could only be a fetter to themselves and a menace to the West. Is it too much to hope for that we shall, when this time comes, be able as brethren together to lay down far-reaching principles for the future of mankind such as will insure us for ever against a repetition of this gigantic folly? If this is to be accomplished it will need the united and persistent pressure of all who believe in such a future for mankind. There will still be multitudes who can see no good in the culture of other nations, and who are unable to believe in any genuine brotherhood among those of different races. Already those, who think otherwise, must begin to think and plan for such a future if the supreme

opportunity of the final peace is not to be lost, and if we are to be saved from being again sucked down into the whirlpool of military aggrandisement and rivalry. In time of peace all the nations have been preparing for war. In the time of war let all men of goodwill prepare for peace. The Christian conscience must be awakened to the magnitude of the issues. The great friendly democracies in each country must be ready to make their influence felt. Now is the time to speak of this thing, to work for it, to pray for it.

5.—If this is to happen, it seems to us of vital importance that the war should not be carried on in any vindictive spirit, and that it should be brought to a close at the earliest possible moment. We should have it clearly before our minds from the beginning that we are not going into it in order to crush and humiliate any nation. The conduct of negotiations has taught us the necessity of prompt action in international affairs. Should the opportunity offer, we, in this nation, should be ready to act with promptitude in demanding that the terms suggested are of a kind which it will be possible for all parties to accept, and that the negotiations be entered upon in the right spirit.

6.—We believe in God. Human freewill gives us power to hinder the fulfilment of His loving purposes. It also means that we may actively co-operate with Him. If it is given to us to see something of a glorious possible future, after all the desolation and sorrow that lie before us, let us be sure that sight has been given us by Him. No day should close without our putting up our prayer to Him that He will lead His family into a new and better day. At a time when so severe a blow is being struck at the great causes of moral, social, and religious reform, for which so many have struggled, we need to look with expectation and confidence to Him, whose cause they are, and find a fresh inspiration in the certainty of His victory.

7, viii. 1914.

Copies of above, for free distribution, may be obtained from Isaac Sharp, 136, Bishopsgate, London, E.C.

HASTENING THE COMING.

A Public Address, by Mary E. Moxey, given under the auspices of the Cardiff Group of the Order of the Star in the East, 7th December, 1913.

THE words forming the title of this paper are to be found in the second letter of St. Peter, chapter iii, verse 12 : "Looking for and hastening the coming of the Day of God." The authorised version reads "Hastening unto the coming," but there is no "unto" in the original. The verb is in the active form, followed by the accusative, therefore the correct translation is "hasting or hastening the coming." The early Christians were convinced of the fact of the Second Advent. Our Lord had been too explicit on the subject to leave them any room for doubt. The writers of the New Testament were confident that He would come again in a "little while." So the writer of the Hebrews said, "For yet a little while, He that cometh, shall come, and shall not tarry" (Hebrews, x, 37). Holding firmly these convictions, many Christians began to be puzzled by the delay. It was evidently the cause of great bewilderment to the members of St. Peter's Church, and they questioned despairingly, "Where is the Promise of His Coming, for since the Fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were" (II Peter, iii, 4).

The centuries have rolled on, and still we ask the self-same question. If our Lord intended to come again quickly, and taught His followers that He would return in a little while, what has been the reason of the delay ? St. Peter does not shirk the question, nor in any way reprove the questioners for putting it. He first tries to show them, that God's estimate of time is different from ours. "Be not ignorant of this one thing, Beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years,

and a thousand years as one day" (II Peter, iii, 8). This is also stated by the Psalmist, who says, "A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday, and as a watch in the night" (Psalm xc, 4). St. Peter further implies that the cause of the delay is not with God, but rather with us. It is not that the Lord has been "Slack concerning His Promise" (II Peter, iii, 9), but that His servants have failed to bring about the necessary conditions for His return. Prophecy is no fatalism, and it has been open to every age to hasten or hinder the coming.

If St. Peter exhorts his fellow Christians to "hasten the coming," he thereby implies that it was in their power to delay it. This is a bold conception, but one that we might well expect from the character of the writer, namely, that every Christian is either hastening or hindering, helping or holding back, the coming of the Lord. St. Peter certainly sees some connection between our lack of spiritual progress, and the delay of the Master. He says the delay means the "long-suffering of God," "not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter, iii, 9), and we are to be assured that the "long-suffering or delay of the Lord is our salvation" (II Peter, iii, 15). Similar teaching is given in the A.^sts of the Apostles : "Repent ye, therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, *that He may send the Christ*" (Acts, iii, 19). In this passage, the sending of the Christ is made conditional on our repentance, and putting away of sin.

We will now come to the Great Teacher Himself. We know that He taught in parables ; "without a parable spake

not unto them" (Mark iv, 34). Of course, our Lord did not originate this method of teaching. The parable is used throughout the East for imparting moral truths. Jesus taught by means of parables, because He knew it was the best way of teaching. This method has two great advantages. In the first place, it is intensely interesting; no one can teach unless he can first arouse interest. Jesus never wearied His audience. "The common people heard Him gladly" (Mark xii, 37), but the Masters in Israel were astonished at His teaching. So we see the other advantage of the method. Each listener can draw from the parable according to his capacity. There is milk for the child and strong meat for the thinker.

We will now glance at three portraits, and discuss very briefly three parables used by Jesus to convey His teaching on the Second Coming. A marked feature of them all is the delay of the Lord and the failure of the servants, and it is from this point of view we will consider them. The three portraits are those of the House-holder, the Evil Servant, and the Wise Servant, and the three parables the Talents, the Wedding, and the Messengers.

1. *The Portrait of the House-holder.* "If the Master of the house had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken through" (Matthew xxiv, 43). The figure of the thief is used to illustrate the manner of the coming. A thief does not approach a house with a flourish of trumpets. The coming is to be unexpected, quiet, stealthy, unobtrusive. St. Paul, referring to this illustration, says, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you as a thief" (I Thess., v, 4). The Householder's ignorance of the time when the thief would come is the reason why he does not watch. If the thief had come in the first watches of the night, he might have found the householder ready for him, but when the second watch arrives, and all seems safe, the thought comes to him, that as he cannot possibly keep awake all night, he may as well go to sleep at once. Then his house is broken through, and he is robbed. He suffers loss, through his in-

ability to keep awake. We see, therefore, that the watchfulness enjoined is literally "wakefulness." We must be fully awake on the spiritual plane, and resist the perpetual temptations to drowsiness. That we do not know the date of His coming is no excuse for sleeping, but a reason for keeping awake. If He has not come in the first or second watch, all the more reason for expecting Him in the third or fourth. Wakefulness, then, is a vivid and present conviction of His certain coming, our eyes ever travelling to the dim distance, to mark the far-off shining of His Glory.

2. *The Portrait of the Evil Servant.* "If the evil servant shall say in his heart, 'My Lord tarrieth,' and shall begin to beat his fellow servants, and shall eat and drink with the drunken, the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knoweth not" (Matthew xxv, 48-50).

According to the authorised version, the evil servant said in his heart, "My Lord delayeth His coming." He was evil because he said it, and he said it because he was evil. His subsequent conduct shows that he dismissed entirely from his mind all anticipation of the Lord's coming, possibly not merely because he had so long delayed, but in thinking that He had broken faith and not kept His promise. Many nominal Christians refuse to contemplate His return, because they have no welcome for Him. They say, "We do not want Him to come again; we should not like it at all." What sort of a servant is he, who has no glow of gladness at the thought of meeting his Lord? We are told that true Christians are "all they that *love His appearing*" (II Timothy, iv, 8). The first generations of Christians were all afame with the glad hope, "Maranatha, the Lord is at hand." Their successors gradually lost the keenness of anticipation, later generations saw the starry hope through thickening mists of years, and now for many it scarcely shines at all, or at least is but a dim point where it should blaze as a sun. The corruptions of the Church can be traced to these foreboding words of the evil servant: "My Lord delayeth His coming." The Church or soul that has ceased to look for



From the painting by Eugène Bernard.

THE TALENTS.

[Copyright—Berger Levrault, Nancy. London Agents—Lawrence & Bullen, Ltd.]

Him will have let all its tasks drop from its drowsy hands. But the evil servant is far worse than the householder. The latter did not deny the possibility of the Coming, he simply took the chance that it might not happen while he slept. If he could have realised what his loss would be, he would have kept awake. The evil servant, however, is so blasphemously certain that the Master will never return, that he begins to torment his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken. His punishment is retributive and terrible (Matthew xxiv, 51). What of the evil servant of to-day, who starves the poor, and tortures helpless Indians in order to pile up gold for himself; shall he escape? Perhaps you think, with the psalmist of old, he does not pay in this life, he flourishes like a green bay tree (Psalm xxxvii, 35). Then be sure there will be other lives for him to live, in which he will pay his debts, and in his own person suffer agony for every pang he has inflicted upon a helpless brother. Otherwise, there is no justice in heaven or earth. "The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small." Can we doubt the solemn words of the Christ Himself: "Verily I say unto you, ye shall not come out thence, till ye have paid the last farthing. For with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you again" (Matthew v, 26; vii, 2).

3. The Portrait of the Wise Servant. "Who then is the wise and faithful servant, whom his Lord hath set over His household, to give them their food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing. Verily, I say unto you, that He will set him over all that He hath" (Matthew xxiv, 45 and 46).

We are taught here that true waiting is to be expressed in a quiet, faithful discharge of appointed tasks. The right place for the servant to be found when his Master comes is "so doing" as He commands. An uncanonical saying of Jesus is very expressive of this truth: "In whatsoever employments I find you, when I come, in these also will I judge you." St. John exhorted us so to live, that we should not "be ashamed before Him when He came" (I. John ii, 28). If He entered our door, would the sentence

die upon our lips, or should we need to hustle things out of His sight? Could we bear His pure eyes to watch us at our work? A famous judge was in court, when a sudden darkness came on. A voice called out, "The Lord is at hand." "If that is so," replied the judge, "bring lights and let us get on with the case." A similar story is told of St. Francis de Sales. He was playing chess with a little boy. A brother monk was perplexed at the spectacle, and said to him, reproachfully, "Brother Francis, what would you do if the Lord came, and found you playing a frivolous game with a foolish child?" The saint answered, "I should finish the game, for He would know I was doing it to His glory."

John Wesley was among the most active of the Lord's servants. He got through a stupendous amount of work, thinking nothing of beginning his day at 3 a.m. His organising power was as wonderful as his activity. One evening, a friend asked him what he intended to do the following day. Mr. Wesley took out his note-book and read out his plan of engagements, showing where he would be found, and what he would be doing, at every hour of the day. "Now," said the friend, "If you knew the Lord was coming to-morrow, what would you do then?" "Exactly the same," replied Wesley; "I should alter nothing." Happy, indeed, are such servants!

Later, Jesus elaborated this portrait of the wise servant, and gave it in the form of two parables, called respectively, that of the *Talents* (Matthew xxv, 14-30; Mark xiii, 34-36) and the *Pounds* (Luke xix, 11-27). The stories are not identical, having important variations, but the main teaching of each is similar. The servants are represented as *working* for their Lord. In both stories we have hints of a long delay. "After a long time, the Lord of those servants cometh." The main teaching is that the long interval between His going away and coming again must be no period of sluggish inactivity, but one for the showing of all good fidelity to an absent Lord.

The judgment of Christ takes no heed of the *extent*, but only of the *kind* of service rendered, and puts on the same level of

reward all who, with widely varying powers, are one in diligence and devotion. The eulogium on the servants is not "successful" nor "brilliant," but "faithful," and both alike receive it irrespective of the number of their talents. All our gifts are for trading, capital to use for the Master. It is noteworthy that the servant who failed was the one talent man. This is just what we should expect. Our talents have been acquired in past lives by hard toil and much striving, so that those who have gained many, would not be likely to lose them again through indolence. The servant with many talents might misuse them, but he would be very unlikely to bury them, having learned the lessons of industry and diligence in the very act of acquiring them. The unfaithful servant had a horrible conception of the Divine Character. He thought of God as demanding from us, instead of giving to us. He did not realise that God is Love—that is, eternal, unlimited, sacrifice and perpetual giving.

The Master asked the unfaithful servant a very significant question, namely, if he thought the talent was too small to be used alone: "Wherefore gavest thou not my money into the bank, and I, at my coming, should have acquired it with interest?" Evidently, this would have been much better than burying the talent. Is this a hint, that those with little capital, may unite in service, if too weak for independent action. If we cannot strike out a path for ourselves, let us seek strength and safety in numbers. Lord Haldane said to the Edinburgh students: "The humblest worker may live for an ideal, may find a cause, and make it his own, to love it and serve it, to live for it, and, if need be, to die for it." So, in the words of Mrs. Browning,

Let us be content in w^rk
To do the thing we can and not pr^{esume}
To fret b^cus: is littl.

knowing that our faithfulness will be crowned with ever-growing capacities for service, and honoured with ever greater and nobler tasks.

The Parable of the Wedding (Matthew xxv. 1-13) is very beautiful and picturesque, In this story we are told that "the bride-

groom tarried." The most likely reason for the tarrying of a bridegroom would be that he was waiting for the bride. The day is fixed, the hour is fixed, the bridegroom is there, but the bride is not ready, therefore he must tarry until she has completed her preparations. In Revelations we find a verse which bears this out: "I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude and as the voice of mighty thunders saying, 'Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice and give honour to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and *His wife hath made herself ready*'" (Revelations xix, 6, 7).

Evidently the cause of Christ's delay is that His people are not ready to meet Him. They are too much concerned with other things, and can give no time nor thought to prepare for Him. If they were ready, He would not tarry. The ten virgins are represented as *waiting* for their Lord. The virgins would include all who profess to be waiting for the Son from heaven. Ten was the usual number in attendance on a wedding, and the equal division in making five wise and five foolish, was probably made so that the point should remain unnoticed. In this story we are shown the colossal absurdity of unreadiness. All the virgins waited, but they were not all ready. Readiness is presented as being in possession of a lamp and oil. "Let your loins be girt about and *your lamps burning*, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord" (Luke xii, 35, 36).

The lamp is an emblem of the Ego, the Divine Ray, the spirit, which is the true man, the body being merely the lamp-stand. In the Old Testament we read of Zechariah's vision (Zechariah iv, 1-6). He saw a golden lamp-stand, holding seven lamps, and on either side an olive tree, from which oil flowed through golden pipes to feed the flames. The key given by the Angel to Zechariah to unlock the meaning of the vision was "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord."

Christ is spoken of as the Lamp, or the Light of the world, and His followers are to be Lamps or Lights in the world, and to let their lamps or lights shine before men. So

the highest importance is placed upon the *Lamp*. Unfortunately, our attitude towards life at the present day shows that we do not hold this view. Most of our attention is lavished on the lamp-stand ; in fact, we even judge that the paltry drapery decorating the lamp-stand is of far more importance than the lamp. What answer does our manner of living give to the question of the Christ : " Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment ? " (Matthew vi, 25 ; Luke xii, 23). What colossal folly to spend so much time over the raiment and the body, that

What are we to understand by the oil, which the wise virgins refused to give to their needy sisters ? Maeterlinck says : " Let us beware, lest we act as he did in the fable, who stood watch in the lighthouse, and gave to the poor in the cabins about him, the oil of the mighty lanterns, that served to illumine the sea. Every soul in its sphere has charge of a lighthouse, for which there is more or less need. See that you give not away the oil of your lamp, though your lamp is never so small ; let your gift be flame, its crown." We cannot give away our oil, if



From the painting by J. G. Landau

THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS.

[Copyright—Henry Greaves & Co., Ltd]

there is no time left in which to live. We ignore what Eucken calls " the deepest part of our being, whence proceeds happiness, originality, and creativeness." Ruskin also tells us " There is no wealth but life, life with all its powers of love and joy and admiration. That nation is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings. That man is richest who has, by means of his attainments and possessions, the widest and most helpful influence over the lives of his fellows."

by the oil we are to understand the sum total of our spiritual acquirements, gains, or possessions. Through many lives we have toiled, and the total spiritual gain of these lives is our oil. Therefore, there is no possible transference of moral character or spiritual gifts.

We notice that all the virgins slept, so that in this story the sin did not consist in the sleeping. Perhaps our Lord considered, in His Divine Compassion, that centuries of delay must have the natural effect of deferred

hope. He does not ask us to be always on the tip-toe of expectation, but considers we have watched aright, if we look upon our lamps as of supreme importance, and see to it that we are well furnished with oil.

At midnight the cry was made. There was a belief among the Jews that the Messiah would come suddenly at midnight, as their forefathers had gone out from Egypt at that very hour. Midnight, "of night's black arch the keystone," was a time when deep sleep falls upon men, when, therefore, such an event would be least expected. *The cry was made* by the retinue running before, or by the jubilant multitude, who had been waiting till that late hour for the passing of the procession. The sudden, loud cry arouses the sleeping virgins. They catch the broken words, "Behold! the bridegroom!" (The word "cometh" is not in the original.) On the heels of the heralds, the procession flashes through the darkness. There is no interval between the cry and the appearance of the bridegroom. Only a moment to rouse themselves, to look to their lamps, to speak the hurried words of the foolish, to give the answer of the wise, and the procession is in sight. We have the impression of swiftness, no time for delayed preparation, like the swoop of an eagle, the blaze of the lightning, in a moment, the twinkling of an eye, "Behold the bridegroom!" All the virgins rose and hastily trimmed their lamps. But, alas, in those belonging to the foolish virgins the light burned for a moment, then flickered feebly, and died down. They give a despairing cry, "Our lamps are going out!" (*Gone out* is an incorrect translation.) Nothing in all the parables is more tragic, more pathetic, than this picture of the hapless five. They heard the procession coming, the sound of the feet drawing near, the music borne every moment more clearly on the midnight air, and there they stood, with dying lamps and empty oil cans! A picture of stupendous folly! Is it possible for the lamp to be extinguished? The teaching of Christ affirms that it is possible. The Divine Spiritual Essence is eternal, and as such, cannot be destroyed, but must return to its Divine Source. Perhaps, in ages to come, it may be given a fresh start in some other line

of evolution, but to lose our place in this evolution, to drop out of it, is loss so great, that our Lord found no words too terrible in which to portray it. "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose himself?" (Matthew xvi, 26; Mark viii, 36).

Let us bear in mind that the virgins did not wilfully nor intentionally destroy their lamps—they simply neglected them. Doing nothing is enough for ruin. Neglect of the lamps is the great sin of our present civilisation. *Nothing is important except as it effects our spiritual life.* "For the mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace" (Romans viii, 6).

Lastly, in the story of the Messengers (Matthew xxi, 33-46; Mark xii, 1-12; Luke xx, 9-18) we see the infinite patience and long-suffering of God. The suggestion of delay is given in the words: The Master of the Vineyard "*went into another country for a long time.*" He gives the charge of the vineyard into the hands of certain husbandmen. From time to time He sends His servants to collect the fruits of the vineyard. "But they took the servant and beat him, and sent him away empty. And again He sent unto them another servant, and him they wounded in the head, and handled shamefully. And He sent another, and him they killed, and many others, beating some and killing some. He had yet one, a beloved son, He sent Him last unto them, saying, 'They will reverence My Son.' But those husbandmen said among themselves, 'This is the heir, come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.' And they took Him and killed Him, and cast Him forth out of the vineyard."

What a terrible indictment! Can we wonder that God delays to send His Christ again! There is in Nehemiah an interesting verse, which reads: "According to thy manifold mercies Thou gavest them Saviours" (Nehemiah ix, 27). Yes, from age to age God has sent His servants, but we have reviled the Messengers, and crucified the Saviours of our race. But if the Heralds perish, the message is always given, for the Great King has declared: "My word shall not return unto Me void, it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in

the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah iv, 11). It seems to us that God always chooses such strange Messengers. They are never the ones that we should have chosen. We should have thought that the High Priests, Annas, or Caiaphas, would have been far more suitable Heralds of the last coming than John the Baptist. At any rate, we should have allowed the announcement to have come from the synagogues. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, saith the Lord, neither are your ways My ways" (Isaiah iv, 8). God chose a man who was true to his convictions, and absolutely fearless in proclaiming them to the world. John feared neither Roman prince nor Jewish priest. He spent much time in meditation, under the desert stars. He wore no fine raiment, ate no flesh, and drank no wine. *To such a one*, the summons came, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord" (Matthew iii, 3). God still vindicates His right to choose His own Messengers. We may discredit the Herald, but the message has come, and the good news will spread from pole to pole. "The King of Glory passes on His way" from the realms of Light down to our sorrowful star.

Many who believe the message have come into this Order of the Star in the East. If

we are true to the principles of the Order, which stand for Brotherhood and Service, we shall hasten the coming of His feet.

I have tried to show you that if the servants had been ready, the Master would have come long ago. But while the servants sleep with ungirt loins, unlit lamps, and unused talents, the Lord of angels waits. Let me conclude in the beautiful words of Faber :—

" Many a star has risen to each of us in the clear, blue night of faith, and we have followed it. Many a one has stood over where the young child lay, and beckoned to us, with a brightness in which we felt there was something heavenly, and yet we have turned away. Would that we had hearts to feel, and eyes to our souls to see the Heavenly Light, and follow it."

O never-failing splendour!
O never-silent song!
Still keep the green earth tender,
Still keep the gay earth strong.
O angels sweet and splendid!
Throng in our hearts and sing,
The wonders which attended
The coming of the King!
Till we too, boldly pressing,
Where once the shepherds trod,
Climb Bethlehem's Hill of Blessing,
And find—the Son of God!

(PHILLIPS BROOKS.)

LONG ago my caravan started on its quest. Since then it has journeyed through many lands, it has halted many a time to buy wares in tumultuous cities, for I seek merchandise for the King. Often it has paused in the desert alone, or rested beside a hedge of tall lilies, away in the South.

In cool and fragrant darkness, when the stars are high in the heavens, it passes on its way. Often my road leads over a winding mountain track, from whence I see the great glacier torrents rush. Again it crosses a leafy forest, where all is hushed and at peace. Often too, it traverses a line of white cliffs by the sea-shore.

Sometimes there comes a mighty storm which seeks to shatter my caravan, and detain me on my way to the King; and I

have often been afraid, and dared not pursue my road during the tempest. This was foolish, for He has said that neither lightning nor thunder have power to harm those who journey on the King's business, carrying His Seal upon them.

It may be long before I reach His Feet, and lay before Him the merchandise I have brought from far countries. But, ever and anon, when I grow weary, a memory comes over me of that day when first I set forth on my quest; how each of His servants who should depart into the world was given the charge to be faithful unto death, as they received a blessing at His hands.

* * *

The day breaks on the far horizon. Can it be that yonder lies the country of my King?

P. C.

LE FEU MYSTIQUE.

I. Lumière et Ténèbres.

“Et la Lumière brille dans les Ténèbres, et les Ténèbres ne l’ont point reçue.”

Cette phrase obscure de l’Evangéliste St. Jean contient le plus haut enseignement qu’il ait été donné à l’homme d’entendre sur les origines et les destinées humaines.

Dans toutes les anciennes cosmogonies, dans les livres sacrés de tous les peuples, dans les écrits des mystiques de tous les temps, partout nous trouvons ce mot *lumière* accolé aux *ténèbres*. Partout nous voyons parler de Feu mystique, de la flamme, de l’étincelle, etc. Si nous voulons vraiment pénétrer dans le vaste domaine de la conscience pure et saisir les brillantes et rapides lueurs qui sillonnent la “nef de notre âme,” comme l’a dit un poète,¹ il nous faut rechercher ce lien qui unit les ténèbres à la lumière, et quelle est la source de ce Feu Mystique qui consume les âmes embrasées de l’amour divin.

Dans un livre archaïque du monde, la *Bhagavad-Gita*, nous trouvons, à l’inverse de la science humaine qui elle, va des détails à l’ensemble, le point de départ de la science mystique qui part de l’ensemble pour aboutir aux détails :

“Il est un figuier perpétuel qui pousse en haut ses racines, en bas ses rameaux, et dont les feuilles sont des poèmes, celui qui le connaît, connaît le Veda.”²

C’est dans ce lieu élevé, presque inaccessible aux paroles, que nous trouverons l’explication du verset johannique.

Prenons encore deux versets de l’Ecriture de différents peuples :

“Comme d’un feu éclatant jaillissent dans mille directions des étincelles de nature identique, ainsi, ô bien-aimé, des créatures

d’espèces variées, naissent de l’Indestructible, et y retournent. . . .”³

Nous trouvons là l’origine même du Feu Mystique, comme nous le verrons plus loin.

David nous montre, lui aussi, la source de toute lumière et par conséquent du Feu : “Dans le Soleil Dieu a disposé sa tente” (Ps. 18). Ne dit-on pas souvent en Occultisme, sous forme d’image, que le soleil est le corps physique du Logos !

Voilà donc un pas de fait, la Lumière est donc ce que nous percevons comme étant *au-delà* de notre conception, au-delà de Brahman, dirait l’Hindou. Quant à la source de la Lumière primordiale, elle est inconnue et inconcevable ; alors, derrière cette Lumière originelle, que se dresse-t-il ? Les Ténèbres. Ténèbres absolues, incompréhensibles, éternelles, vaste abîme où règne le silence : “obscurité merveilleuse, dit St. Denys *l’Aéropagite* parlant des Ténèbres, qui rayonne en splendides éclairs, et qui, ne pouvant être ni vue, ni saisie, inonde de la beauté de ses feux les esprits saintement aveugles.”⁴ Telles sont ces Ténèbres illuminées, d’où la Lumière sans forme émerge radieuse et triomphante.

Entrons encore plus dans le détail de cette métaphysique où l’âme semble prise de vertige aux sommets de ces pics ailiers de la connaissance absolue.

Voyons ce que dit, à ce propos, Mme. Blavatsky dans la *Doctrine Secrète* :

“La lumière est inconcevable si elle ne vient de quelque source qui en soit la cause ; et comme dans le cas de la Lumière primordiale, cette source est inconnue, quoique très réclamée par la raison et la logique, nous l’appelons au point de vue intellectuel (Ténèbres). Quant à la lumière secondaire

¹ Rudyard Kipling. *Kim.*

² Op. Cit., p. 98, trad. Burnouf.

³ Mundaka-Upanishad II-I, trad. française Marcault. Edit. Théos.

⁴ Théologie Mystique, p. 276.

ou empruntée quelle que soit sa source, elle ne peut avoir, qu'un caractère temporaire ou mayavique. Les Ténèbres sont donc la Matrice éternelle dans laquelle les sources de la Lumière apparaissent et disparaissent.”¹

Singulier rapprochement avec ce que nous citons plus haut de St. Denis, où nous retrouvons le même langage ainsi que dans la plupart des grands mystiques.

Poursuivons dans la “Doctrine Secrète” de notre grand Occultiste, nous allons pouvoir saisir la correspondance qui existe entre notre Moi humain et le Macrocosme :—

“Sur notre plan, rien n'est ajouté aux ténèbres pour les changer en lumière, et rien non plus à la lumière pour la changer en ténèbres. Les deux sont corrélatifs, et scientifiquement, la lumière n'est qu'une manière d'être des ténèbres et *vice-versa*. Cependant toutes les deux sont les phénomènes du même noumène-qui est pour l'esprit scientifique, l'obscurité absolue ; pour la perception du mystique ordinaire un crépuscule grisâtre ; mais pour l'œil spiritualisé de l'Initié, la lumière absolue.” Puis, Mme. Blavatsky ajoute :—

“Le degré de lumière que nous percevrons dans les ténèbres, dépend de nos pouvoirs de vision. . . .”

Tout mystique comprendra aisément cette phrase, car les forces vives de la conscience mystique ne peuvent être eveillées qu'autant que la vision intérieure s'élargit et embrasse l'univers. C'est pourquoi St. Jean de la Croix nous dit : “Le rayon de lumière est insaisissable quand il est pur ; mais s'il rencontre un objet qui le reflète, son existence se révèle à l'instant.”²

Enfin, Mme. Blavatsky termine :—

“. . . D'après l'enseignement de l'Occultisme Oriental, les Ténèbres sont la seule vraie actualité, la base et la racine de la Lumière, sans laquelle cette dernière ne pourrait jamais se manifester, ni même exister. La Lumière est la matière, et les Ténèbres sont l'Esprit pur. Les ténèbres, dans leur base radicale et métaphysique, sont la lumière subjective et absolue ; tandis

que cette dernière, lorsqu'elle est dans tout son éclat et sa gloire apparente, n'est qu'une masse d'ombres, parce qu'elle ne peut jamais être éternelle, et n'est simplement qu'Illusion.”³

Nous commençons à voir maintenant le lien qui rattache la Lumière aux Ténèbres. Les Ténèbres sont la seule et pure Lumière éternelle qui a toujours existé, qui existe et existera toujours. Elle est ténèbre parce qu'étant la Lumière absolue, nous ne pouvons la concevoir et la définir. Les Ténèbres sont donc, comme le dit H. P. Blavatsky, la base et la racine même de la Lumière. Tandis que la Lumière n'est qu'un pâle reflet, si grande soit sa luminosité, de la Lumière absolue : les Ténèbres.

Alors, le sens du verset évangélique, cité au début de cet article, se dégage et nous pouvons comprendre que les Ténèbres ne pouvaient recevoir la Lumière, puisqu'elles sont elles-mêmes la Lumière absolue, et comme le dit encore Mme. Blavatsky : “Le mot (Ténèbres) ne s'applique pas à la vision spirituelle de l'homme, mais véritablement aux Ténèbres, à l'Absolu, qui ne comprend pas (ne peut pas connaître) la Lumière passagère, quelque transcendante qu'elle puisse paraître aux yeux humains.”⁴

Nous retrouvons, dans le texte biblique, le Très-Haut, environné des Ténèbres :—

“Une nuée épaisse était sous ses pieds. . . . Les ténèbres l'enveloppaient comme un manteau, les sombres vapeurs des nuées de l'air formaient comme une tente autour de lui.”⁵

Pénétrons dans la conscience, et voyons si ce qui précède peut nous servir dans l'étude des phénomènes de la vie intérieure.

Dans la nature spirituelle de l'homme nous retrouvons ces jeux d'ombre et de lumière qui ne sont que le simple reflet des choses qui se passent sur les mondes élevés de la Nature. Lorsque la conscience supérieure de l'homme se développe d'une façon spéciale, sous l'action interne de la volonté, et que la vie intérieure, devient plus profonde, la lumière inonde l'âme et il semble alors

³ Op. Cit., p. 48.

⁴ Op. Cit., p. 49.

⁵ Ps. 17—Segond, Ps. 18.

que les états de conscience du passé n'étaient que ténèbres comparativement à la clarté actuelle. Ces ténèbres doivent être franchies par le mystique s'il veut atteindre les couches supérieures de son Moi. Ces ténèbres sont appelées dans la mystique chrétienne : nuit des sens, et aussi nuit de l'esprit.

L'obscurité, prise, au sens véritablement mystique, prend alors la profonde signification, émise plus haut par Mme. Blavatsky, à savoir : *Les Ténèbres, Lumière absolue*. Pour saisir le rôle des ténèbres dans la conscience, il faut connaître la nature de cette conscience. Or, qu'est-ce que la conscience ? Ou plus exactement qu'est-ce que *l'homme vrai* ?

D'après la Théosophie, et c'est à ce point de vue que nous nous plaçons, l'homme, en essence, est une Etincelle du Feu divin. Cette étincelle porte le nom de Monade. Comme nous l'avons vu au début, les Ecritures orientales appellent toujours la Monade : l'étincelle échappée de la *Grande Flamme* : "Comme d'un feu éclatant jaillissent dans mille directions des étincelles de nature identique, ainsi, ô bien-aimé, des créatures d'espèces variées naissent de l'Indestructible et y retournent" (*voir plus haut*). Voici donc la Monade échappée du Feu Mystique. Avec cette image, nous comprendrons mieux la relation qui existe entre les ténèbres du Cosmos (ne pas oublier que les Ténèbres sont la source de toute Lumière) et les ténèbres dans la Monade. Dans l'étude du Cosmos et de l'âme humaine on retrouve toujours l'éternelle loi de réflexion. Nous arrivons à une seconde question : cette étincelle, appelée Monade, quelle est sa nature ? La Monade est triple et reflète les trois aspects du Logos :—

1°. *Volonté*, le Pouvoir divin, l'Unité.

2°. *Sagesse*, domaine de la Raison pure, le Christ dans l'homme.

3°. *Activité*, siège des idées abstraites et de l'intuition.

Connaissant la racine même de son Moi et ayant toujours présente à l'esprit cette triade spirituelle, le mystique pourra comprendre, à l'aide de la loi de réflexion, que si la racine de l'Absolu est ténèbres, essence de toute Lumière, la racine même de sa triade est aussi ténèbres. Pourquoi et

comment ? Je sais que la question est difficile à résoudre, mais je crois que nous pouvons y arriver par un effort d'abstraction et d'analyse.

Le grand Pythagore nous donne la clef de l'énigme en disant "que la Monade rentre dans le silence et les Ténèbres aussitôt qu'elle a évolué la Triade."¹ C'est-à-dire qu'une fois la Triade immortelle, Volonté—Sagesse—Activité, ou bien encore *l'Atma*—*Bouddhi*—*Manas* de la philosophie de l'Inde, une fois que chacun des aspects de la Monade fonctionne librement sur leurs plans respectifs, et que la conscience s'est épanouie dans chacun de ses véhicules, alors, comme le dit Pythagore, *la Monade rentre dans les ténèbres*, source de la Lumière, dans le sein du Père. En effet, l'aspect Volonté (*Atma*) de la Monade n'est-il pas, ainsi, que l'exprime Mme. Blavatsky, "l'unique base réelle et éternelle du tout, l'essence et le savoir absolu."² Nous aboutissons donc forcément à la conclusion logique que si l'Absolu est ténèbres et que les ténèbres sont l'essence de la Lumière, l'aspect Volonté (*Atma*) de la Monade est aussi ténèbres, source de la Lumière dans la conscience humaine.

Cela nous incite à comprendre le sens profond d'un passage d'un petit livre appelé. *Lumière sur le Sentier*, où il est dit à celui qui marche sur les voies du Mysticisme : "Lorsque tu auras trouvé le commencement de la voie, l'étoile de ton âme fera voir sa lumière, et à sa clarté tu percevas combien grande est l'obscurité dans laquelle elle luit."³

Le mystique peut voir ainsi qu'à mesure que sa conscience s'élargit, se dilate sous la poussée du Dieu intérieur, la lumière se fait plus intense, mais cette lumière tout en devenant plus brillante reculera toujours et fera voir "combien grande est l'obscurité dans laquelle elle luit" comparativement aux Ténèbres, la Lumière absolue. "Tu entreras dans la Lumière, mais jamais tu ne toucheras la Flamme."

Telle est, en résumé, l'ascension ou plutôt le retour de l'étincelle divine vers le Feu mystique d'où elle est issue, comme le dit le

¹ Doctrine Secrète-Blavatsky, II Vol., p. 150.

² Op. Cit., p. 150, 2 vol.

³ Op. Cit., p. 19.

grand apôtre Initié, St. Paul : "cette lumière inaccessible que nul homme n'a vue ni ne peut voir."¹

Tous les mystiques ont parlé de la grande ténèbre mystérieuse, et lui ont toujours joint le Feu Mystique. Pour n'en citer que quelques uns :—

Le doux contemplatif flamand Ruysbroeck s'écrie :—

"Il faut se perdre dans la ténèbre sacrée où la jouissance délivre l'homme de lui-même, et ne plus se retrouver suivant le mode humain. Dans l'abîme de la ténèbre où l'amour donne le feu de la mort, je vois poindre la vie éternelle et la manifestation de Dieu."²

La bienheureuse Angèle de Foligno :—

"Un jour je fus élevée en esprit. . . . J'étais dans la ténèbre divine ne pouvant ni rétrograder ni avancer. Soudain l'élévation et l'illumination augmentèrent : je vis la puissance inénarrable de Dieu."³

Tauler :—

" . . . Dieu veut habiter dans les puissances supérieures. . . . C'est là sa vraie demeure. . . . C'est là que nous devons le chercher. . . . C'est la mystérieuse ténèbre où se cache le bien sans bornes."⁴

St. Jean de la Croix :—

"Le feu d'amour qui brûle en elle (*l'âme mystique*) s'échappe en vives flammes et la rend semblable à un foyer ardent."⁵

Bornons nous à ne citer que ces mystiques, un volume entier suffirait à peine pour contenir les ardentes paroles de ces âmes consumées par le feu divin et nous retrouverions toujours ces mêmes mots : feu, flamme, ténèbre, nuit, etc.

Nous avons vu très succinctement l'origine même du Feu Mystique et son pouvoir de réflexion dans la Monade. Il nous reste à démontrer, dans un article prochain, les effets réels produits par le Feu Mystique dans la nature humaine, et nous montrerons, avec exemples à l'appui, que Mysticisme et Occultisme sont bien deux voies identiques aboutissant ensemble à la *Maison du Père*.

¹ I. Ep. à Tim., Chap. VI.

² Oeuvres de Ruysbroeck, par. Hello.

³ Des Grâces d'oraison. Abbé Poulain, p. 283.

⁴ Op. Cit., p. 283.

⁵ Oeuvres, St. Jean de la Croix I, III., p. 399.

II. Ses phénomènes.

Nous avons étudié, dans un article précédent, l'origine de la Lumière et des Ténèbres, et nous avons vu que la Monade de l'homme, sous son triple aspect, est une étincelle divine échappée du Grand Feu central, le Très-Haut. La Monade étant divine de par sa naissance, sa réflexion dans le sein de la matière est donc divine. Or, attiser en nous cette étincelle, c'est éveiller le Feu Mystique qui sommeille, c'est développer la vie spirituelle, la seule qui vaille vraiment la peine d'être vécue, c'est déchirer le voile des passions et des désirs, des émotions et des pensées, qui entoure la Monade.

Comment cette étincelle peut-elle se développer dans l'homme ? "Cette étincelle se développe, nous dit Mme. Besant, par la combustion. Cette combustion signifie l'ardeur de la connaissance . . . qui brûle et purifie ; et ce qu'elle brûle, ce sont les enveloppes extérieures de l'homme où réside l'épaisse ignorance ; et à mesure qu'elles se trouvent ainsi brûlées l'une après l'autre par le feu de la connaissance, la Flamme se manifeste davantage et commence à connaître sa propre nature. Cette étincelle qui était étouffée dans la matière devient la Flamme qui s'est elle-même libérée de la matière, et quand cette libération est complète, elle devient une avec sa source."⁶

Cette connaissance ou ce Feu mystique qui brûle et purifie produit, chez tous ceux dans lesquels il est éveillé, des effets certains, réels, qui se traduisent tous par des phénomènes qui semblent autant de pouvoirs merveilleux dans la Mystique chrétienne, mais qui, en Occultisme, sont le résultat logique d'une loi commune.

Prenons le début d'un homme qui entre résolument sur ce Sentier de Sainteté qui consiste à "devenir un Christ," comme l'a dit St. Paul. Occultisme et Mysticisme s'accordent pour dire que celui qui fait appel ainsi aux énergies supérieures de sa conscience doit attendre inévitablement les effets qui doivent se produire sans la nature inférieure de l'homme. Un bouillonnement confus, un mélange de passions mauvaises

⁶ La Construction de l'Univers, p. 61 et 62.

avec les tendres pousses des vertus, une intensification de l'ombre et de la lumière, tel sera la résultat provoqué par la vie spirituelle qui inonde l'âme du néophyte. . . . “ De même que le feu fait disparaître la rouille et les scories des métaux, s'écrie St. Jean de la Croix, ainsi Dieu va purifiant l'âme, émondant, consument en elle toutes les habitudes imparfaites contractées jusqu'alors. Néanmoins, comme ces défauts ont jeté de profondes racines dans l'âme, leur extirpation lui fait éprouver une véritable agonie.”¹

Or, par la discipline de la vie intérieure, par l'application rigoureuse des règles établies, que ce soit dans la Yoga des Hindous ou bien dans la Mystique chrétienne, en laissant à part l'épanouissement de la conscience supérieure qui est une condition *sine qua non* de notre progrès, nous arrivons à ces phénomènes certains dont nous parlions plus haut, et qui font l'objet de cet article.

Avant de les étudier nous pouvons dire de suite, que ces phénomènes peuvent se trouver à l'état d'éveil semi-conscient chez certains occultistes de bas-étage, ou de pseudo-mystiques, ou bien encore chez des personnes très sensitives et psychiques de tempérament comme nous le trouvons chez les montagnards d'Ecosse, ou parfois chez les paysans de Westphalie. L'éveil conscient et complet de ces phénomènes ne peut se trouver que chez le disciple qui travaille sous la direction des grands Maîtres de Sagesse, ou aussi, comme nous le verrons, chez le vrai mystique à l'âme pure et noble. Mais avec la différence que ce qui est conscient chez le premier est souvent inconscient chez le second. Cet éveil a lieu alors dans ce dernier par l'amour profond à son Seigneur. Cela posé, cherchons dans les vieux textes ce qui nous aidera le plus à comprendre notre sujet et si nous ne trouverons pas une similitude de langage dans les différentes Ecritures, ce qui nous prouvera encore l'unité de la pensée ésotérique dans les religions du monde.

Parlant du Feu Mystique brûlant dans le cœur, nous lisons dans la *Kathopanishad* :—

“ Ton âme révérée connaît bien le feu qui

mène au ciel. . . . Sache que ce feu renfermé dans le lieu secret (*le cœur*), est le moyen de parvenir à des mondes sans fin. . . .”²

Dans un autre livre, non moins ancien, il est dit ces paroles au sens si profond :—

“ Ne laisse pas ton (Céleste-Né) ” c'est-à-dire la Monade divine dans l'homme,³ “ plongé dans l'océan de Maya, se détacher de la Mère universelle (*Dieu*), mais laisse le Pouvoir enflammé⁴ se retirer dans la chambre intime, la chambre du cœur et le séjour de la Mère du Monde.”⁴

L'ancien Testament vient nous donner, à son tour, son appui en nous disant par la bouche de Jérémie :—

“ Il a envoyé d'en haut un feu dans mes os, et il m'a enseigné.”⁵ Paroles au sens énigmatiques et qu'un occultiste comprendra.

Le prophète Ezéchiel, assis dans sa maison, raconte :—

“ . . . La main du Seigneur tomba sur moi, Je regardai, et voici, c'était une figure ayant l'aspect d'un homme: depuis ses reins en bas,⁶ c'était du feu, et depuis ses reins en haut, c'était quelque chose d'éclatant.”⁷

Ces phrases nous montrent bien que dans l'antique Israël les écoles de prophètes possédaient la tradition ésotérique, et que leurs membres étaient initiés aux mystères les plus profonds.

Enfin terminons ces citations en écoutant le chantre hébreu :—

“ Mon cœur brûlait au-dedans de moi, un feu intérieur me consumait et la parole est venue sur ma langue.”⁸

Par ces textes empruntés à différentes sources nous nous trouvons devant le fait suivant : dans le région intime du cœur se trouve un “ Pouvoir enflammé ” qui donne aux yeux de chair la “ vision de l'Esprit.”

Voyons maintenant ce que nous apprend la science occulte.

Nous possédons dans chacun de nos corps sept centres de force appelés en sanscrit

² Neuf Upanishads, Trad. française, p. 28.

³ Noy en italiques dans le texte.

⁴ La Voix du Silence. H. P. Blavatsky, p. 22.

⁵ Lamentations de Jérémie, I, 13.

⁶ Non en italiques.

⁷ Ezéchiel, 8, 2.

⁸ Ps. 39, Segond.

chakrams ce qui signifie roue. Ces centres se trouvent dans les parties suivantes du corps :

- 1°. La base de la colonne vertébrale.
- 2°. L'ombilic.
- 3°. La rate.
- 4°. Le cœur.
- 5°. La gorge.
- 6°. L'espace entre les sourcils.
- 7°. Le sommet de la tête.

Ces parties du corps sont à retenir, car nous verrons plus loin certains faits chez des mystiques corroborant entièrement la lomnée occulte.

Il y a trois autres centres, mais ils ne sont pas utilisés par les adeptes de la Magie Blanche. Ces centres de force sont la manifestation dans le corps physique d'une des grandes forces universelles à l'œuvre dans l'univers. Le premier de ces centres, à la base de l'épine dorsale, est le siège de cette force mystérieuse appelée Serpent de feu, en Sanscrit *Koundalini*. C'est le " Pouvoir enflammé " cité plus haut qui " même au ciel " dit la *Kathopanishad*, " depuis les reins jusqu'en haut c'était du feu," s'écrie Ezéchiel.

" Ces appellations étranges ne sont pas sans raison, nous dit Mr. Leadbeater, car cette force est en vérité analogue à un feu liquide, lorsqu'elle s'élance à travers du corps, et le cours qu'elle doit suivre est une spirale analogue aux anneaux d'un serpent."¹

Ce feu mystique une fois éveillé, sa force devient formidable et éveillé, à leur tour, les autres centres de force, chacun desquels ouvre à la conscience une fenêtre sur la perception des mondes invisibles. Une fois tous les centres éveillés, l'homme devient conscient du monde qui lui est immédiatement supérieur, *il voit, il entend, il comprend*.

Chez l'homme ordinaire le serpent de feu est endormi. Il peut s'éveiller, il est vrai, par des pratiques de *Hatha Yoga*, mais un éveil prématûr provoque des résultats terribles qui peuvent entraîner la folie ou la mort de celui qui a ambitionné les pouvoirs psychiques. C'est pourquoi, le danger étant si grand, l'on met les étudiants de la Sagesse

occulte en garde contre l'éveil des centres de force. Les pouvoirs de l'âme s'éveilleront le jour où le disciple sera prêt, ils sont l'apanage de celui qui a le cœur pur. Ces centres sont alors de vrais petits soleils resplendissants.

Nous empruntons maintenant au livre de Mr. Leadbeater, *l'Occultisme dans la Nature*, les détails concernant les centres de force. Nous avons dit que le serpent de feu une fois éveillé fait entrer en activité les autres centres de force. Voyons les effets qu'ils produisent, cela nous aidera à mieux comprendre les faits mystiques.

Lorsque le second centre entre en activité, centre ombilical, l'homme commence à être conscient dans son corps physique des influences bonnes ou mauvaises du monde astral.

Le troisième centre, qui correspond à la rate, donne le souvenir des expériences faites dans le monde astral pendant le sommeil.

L'éveil du quatrième centre, le cœur, donne à l'homme cette grande qualité de l'altruisme, qui lui fait ressentir les peines et les joies de l'humanité.

Le cinquième centre, qui correspond à la gorge, donne la clairaudience : l'homme est susceptible d'entendre les voix ou les sons au monde astral.

Quand le sixième centre s'éveille, l'espace entre les sourcils, on devient un *Voyant*, on voit à l'état de veille les personnes, les paysages qui peuvent se présenter à la vue de l'âme. C'est la clairvoyance.

Enfin, l'éveil du septième centre, au sommet de la tête, permet à l'homme de quitter son corps en pleine conscience.

Telle est la marche des centres qui s'allument sous l'action du serpent de feu, et sous la direction indispensable d'un Maître. Cependant, comme nous l'avons dit plus haut, il peut arriver, par l'effet d'une excitation interne, que l'un de ces centres s'éveille, sans pour cela que les autres bougent. Il arrive alors, à celui qui en est l'objet, soit une clairvoyance momentanée, une audition rapide d'un son ou d'une voix, ou bien encore des sensations pénibles dues à des influences astrales, etc. C'est ce que nous trouvons souvent chez certains mystiques.

¹ L'Occultisme dans la Nature. Tome I, p. 352.
Consultez l'ouvrage pour plus de détails.

Voilà donc les effets certains que peuvent constater ceux qui ont allumé le Feu mystique dans le cœur. Que ce soit par sacrifice, par amour pur, par le contrôle des émotions, par la maîtrise totale ou en voie de l'être de son Moi, celui qui avance sur ce Sentier mystique ou occulte, par le fait même qu'il est sur cette Voie, allume ce Feu Mystique, dont les résultats matériels, pour ainsi dire, arriveront tôt ou tard à se faire jour, et peut s'écrire alors avec Jérémie : "Il a envoyé d'en haut un feu dans mes os et il (le Seigneur) m'a enseigné."

Nous avons dit que nous trouvions chez les mystiques de l'Eglise catholique ces mêmes phénomènes, mais ces faits sont souvent produits, pour ne pas dire toujours, inconsciemment par leurs auteurs, et les témoins constatent, crient au prodige ou au miracle sans pouvoir expliquer l'étrangeté du phénomène, et cela parce que l'Eglise a perdu la vraie tradition ésotérique. Relatons pour les besoins de notre cause quelques faits typiques pris dans la grande épopée de la Mystique chrétienne :—

Un capucin, Jérôme de Nami, éprouvait un feu tellement violent dans ses transports de dévotion que son linge se consumait du côté gauche, du côté du cœur, et que même son vêtement se trouvait brûlé par ces flammes intérieures. Nous avons vu, par l'enseignement occulte, qu'il existe un centre de force dans les régions du cœur.

La bienheureuse Julienne fournit un exemple curieux : pendant la Messe, après l'Evangile, on voyait s'élever de sa tête une colonne de fumée.

Il arrive parfois que le serpent de feu, *Koundalini*, s'éveille de lui-même. Alors, dans ce cas, qui est rare, le feu s'élançait en spirale le long de la colonne vertébrale et s'échappait par le sommet de la tête. D'où les témoins auront pu voir cette colonne de fumée, dit-on, s'échapper de la tête de la bienheureuse.

D'autres mystiques comme sainte Rose, Thomas Lombard, saint Ravelle, avaient pour particularité de dégager au sommet de la tête des rayons de lumière intense. Chez saint Columba, pendant la Messe, c'était un globe de feu, souvent une étoile comme

celle que l'on voyait au-dessus de la tête de Didace Lauda.

St. Pierre d'Alcantara était si embrasé par le feu mystique que cela lui produisait des douleurs intolérables. Un jour d'hiver, plus consumé que jamais, il alla se jeter dans un étang glacé. Un autre serait mort à sa place, mais on vit la glace se fondre autour de lui et l'eau bouillait comme sur un grand feu.

Cette lumière mystique irradie parfois des yeux.

Ida de Louvain, recevant les sacrements, ses yeuxjetaient de tels rayons de lumière qu'ils éclairaient les objets aussi lumineusement que le soleil.

Nous savons qu'un centre de force existe entre les sourcils.

Le bienheureux Henri Suso, un jour qu'il était assis dans sa cellule, entra en extase. Il vit alors sortir de son cœur un rayon d'une éblouissante clarté et dans son cœur même une croix garnie de pierres précieuses sur laquelle était gravée le nom de Jésus. Il essaya, au moyen de ses vêtements, de voiler cette lumière, mais il ne put y parvenir.

Enfin, même dans la mort nous retrouvons ces phénomènes : Un chartreux inconnu fut tellement envahi, dans sa méditation, par le feu dévorant qui brûlait en lui qu'il mourut au milieu de ses prières. Des marchands qui passaient sur la route virent s'élever une flamme vive au-dessus du couvent. Craignant un incendie ils avertirent le portier. On ne trouva nulle trace de feu, mais on vit dans le jardin notre moine à genoux, mort, les mains jointes, et sur lui s'élevait une colonne de feu.

Nous pourrions citer bien d'autres exemples,¹ toujours aussi frappants comme concordance avec la théorie occulte, mais le cadre d'un article nous oblige à nous arrêter. Nous en avons suffisamment pour démontrer que, grâce à l'enseignement de l'Occultisme, nous pouvons comprendre les manifestations physiques du Feu Mystique. Il faudrait nous étendre davantage pour faire entrer dans la catégorie de ces faits tous les phénomènes de clairvoyance et de clairaudience que l'on rencontre chez les mysti-

¹ Tous les cas cités sont extraits du Dictionnaire de Mystique chrétienne, de l'abbé Migne, voir aux mots Feu, Lumière.

ques. Visions, souvenirs de voyages pendant le sommeil, audition de sons ou de voix, apports de fleurs, prophéties, incombustibilité des corps, etc., etc., tous ces faits peuvent entrer dans notre cadre, et nous pouvons dire, tout comme Mr. Jourdain qui faisait de la prose sans le savoir, bien des mystiques on fait de l'occultisme sans s'en douter.

Plus de miracles, de prodiges. Des effets naturels soumis à une loi invariable commune à tous. L'auréole éblouissante d'un Saint peut devenir notre partage, selon les efforts que nous aurons apportés dans l'édification de nos vertus.

D'aucuns diront, en parlant de ces faits : maladies du sentiment religieux, suggestion, hysterie. Qu'importe ! . . . Le Sentier, foulé jadis par ces doux mystiques au cœur plein d'amour et de charité, existe toujours et nous pouvons à notre tour y marcher si nous le désirons. Nous rencontreras les mêmes faits, nous serons arrêtés par les mêmes obstacles, notre cœur sera embrasé par le même Feu divin, car l'essence de notre âme n'est pas différente de celle d'autrefois. Nous sommes toujours les mêmes étincelles—sœurs émanées, comme nous le disions au début de cette étude, du Grand Foyer central, notre Père à tous. En nous tous brille la flamme du grand Savoir et c'est en cherchant et en aimant aussi que nous trouverons.

Nous sommes arrivés au terme de cette imparfaite étude. Nous sommes partis d'en haut, où règne la Lumière et les Ténèbres, et nous avons essayé de comprendre le mécanisme de ces hautes lois qui sont un vertige pour notre pauvre entendement humain. Puis, nous sommes descendus dans les replis de notre conscience et là nous avons pu faiblement entrevoir le reflet des choses célestes. Enfin, prenant un côté isolé de la question, nous avons établi la relation profonde qui existe d'une part, entre les faits mystiques du Feu symbolique et d'autre part avec le haut enseignement de l'Occultisme.

Nous avons laissé de côté, à dessein, l'étude de l'épanouissement de la conscience spirituelle, nous bornant aux manifestations du Feu mystique dans l'âme humaine. Mais, nous pouvons dire, en terminant, que c'est en élargissant, en enrichissant notre conscience de qualités nouvelles que nous pouvons alimenter ce Feu mystique qui couve à l'état latent en nous, et le faire épanouir dans toute sa clarté radieuse, et "c'est seulement alors que tu pourras devenir un '*Promeneur du Ciel*,' un de ceux qui marchent sur les vents au-dessus des vagues, sans que leurs pas touchent les eaux."¹

LOUIS REVEL.

¹ La Voix du Silence, p. 23.

A CRY.

(*Cleanse the dark ways that they foul not His feet.*)

Climb, my sisters, the light shines aye
From the temple-crest of the moun-
tain high,
Symbol of Godhead, pointing the Way.
Climb and fear not, for help is nigh ;
Helping hands of love are nigh.
(*We are blind, we see not, how can we climb ?*)

Climb, my brothers, the light shines bright,
Like the arms of His love, round sinful
and sad,
Arms ever around us, though out of sight.
Open the eyes of your soul and be
glad.
Climb in the joy of His love and be
glad.
(*We are deaf, we hear not, how can we climb ?*)

Sisters, brothers, the light shines forth
For you, down the heights and over the plain.
East and south and west and north,
Circling the world as a flaming chain,
Links of love in an endless chain.
(*We are clutched by the quagmire, we cannot
climb !*)

At sunset and dawn, yea, with each heart beat,
As day waxes and wanes, and as dark
midnight
Drags soiled wings on the weary street,
Stream to you thoughts of strength and
light.
Thoughts of purity, strength, and light.
• • • •

(*The light has reached us, we climb, we climb !*)

MARGARET THEODORA GRIFFITH.

THE WAY OF THE SOUL.

I PASSED across the sunlit meadows and gathered bright flowers, weaving them into scented garlands with which I decked myself, dancing the while for joy. Anon my path brought me to a wood, filled with great purple and yellow blossoms, but the gateway was fast barred, and a voice cried : " My child, do not enter. Follow the Path before thee, for it leads to Beauty undreamed of."

I longed to gather the gay-coloured blossoms, and sought to force open the gate, but only hurt my hands. I approached the low wall, but heard the warning hiss of a serpent from among the bushes on the other side. Growing weary, I wept, and saw that my bright garlands were fast fading.

Then once more I pursued the way—now sadly, despondently. The road became steep and rugged, and I longed yet again for the pleasant wood. Higher and still higher I ascended, and the air grew cold and bleak. Darkness began to fall around me, and I became afraid. Almost mechanically, I pressed on, until, after a time, I became conscious of another presence than my own. One whom I could but dimly see because of the darkness, went before me. But as the mountain path turned, the rising moon illumined this Figure, and I had a momentary glimpse of One both dear and familiar to me. Where I had seen Him I did not know ; but the distant wood, with its gorgeous blossoms, were forgotten, and I felt a sense of ever-deepening peace and joy.

On and on we went, now over dark, stony places, now emerging into the full glory of the moonlight, until, at length, I saw before us a great White Temple, and knew that we had reached the summit.

" God engages some men in observation, and they know Him by pondering over His creation. He leads others to His knowledge through asceticism. There is another class of men whose hearts He illuminates at once. Again some are debarred from the essence

Then my Guide turned, and taking my hand in His, He said :—

" Look behind you at the steep path up which you have climbed. Do you now regret the enchanted wood ? Do you regret the weariness, the loneliness, and blackness of the night ? "

I looked at the beautiful Face beside me, aglow with divine compassion, superhuman understanding, and knew it to be the Face of a Man made perfect. Filled with my utter unworthiness, with overwhelming shame, I knelt, clasping His feet.

Gently He raised me from the ground, and said : " The journey has not ended ; this is but the first stage. Your road onwards must be unseen, unknown, until you have entered the Temple and therein have acquired knowledge of the Mysteries. But do you will to tread the Path, for that which lies before you is steeper, more stony, and rough, beset with perils of which, as yet, you know nothing. Are you willing to endure, to suffer, and at length, when you have reached the supreme Goal, will you gladly return from thence to point out the way to your brethren who linger in the plains yonder ? "

I knew, then, that my whole longing was centred on one object—to follow the Master, though it should be through countless births and deaths. To tread the Path, whatever the cost. To become a means of helping my brothers dwelling in the far plains, who as yet could not dream of the untold happiness awaiting them.

Of speech there was no need, for the Master had read my heart. In silence I followed Him within the Temple Gates.

of the Divine Knowledge, others from the Path itself. ' The Divine Beauty has thousands of aspects, each atom presenting some peculiar one.' "

—From the *Theosophy of Islam.*

WAR.

AS the Pacificist came into the breakfast-room his daughter glanced at him anxiously. He was always particularly irritable on the days when he was going to lecture, and that evening he was going to lecture to a society of unimpeachable altruistic principles, on "Some Methods of Educating the Less Advanced." Indeed, the fact that it was the day of her father's lecture was not unconnected with the "headache" which had kept her mother in bed that morning.

The Pacificist belonged to quite a number of societies, based on high altruistic principles, whose nobility was only equalled by the earnestness of their members. Indeed, it was no exaggeration to say he devoted his life to them—so much so, in fact, that too often did the Immediate have to give way to the Universal, and the amenities of home life to the Rights of Man.

He opened an envelope by carefully inserting a fork into it, took out a magazine, and began to read; but, seeing his daughter was about to speak to him, he closed the magazine and leaned back in his chair with an air of fierce resignation.

"Here is a letter from Jack, father. He says all the boys are going to camp at the beginning of the summer holidays, and he wants you to let him go."

"Well, you need not bother me about it now, if he does! He ought to know by this time what my wishes are in that respect. As if there were not enough to worry about just now! Actually in this age of culture and spiritual enlightenment we have thousands of morally degraded ruffians murdering each other at the bidding of millions of undeveloped, uncontrolled, hysterical fanatics mad with war fever. They say the world is governed by an intelligent hierarchy; surely such people should be punished by a second Flood or by fire from heaven!"

In the evening the Pacificist outlined with conclusive arguments several clear and well-thought out methods by which the blind might be made to see, the deaf to hear. He returned home in a happier frame of mind.

Having expressed himself to his satisfaction, he felt less bitter against those who could not see as he saw; and his heart he'd much genuine pity for the tragic ignorance of the mass of mankind.

That night he had a dream. In his dream he was sitting at his writing-table preparing that very lecture he had just delivered, when one came to him and said :

"You spoke to-day of those whom we call the Masters of Wisdom, who are ever helping humanity to shape the destinies of the world. Do you desire to behold such an one ? "

"Yes," said the Pacificist ; "but surely their wrath must be terrible at what is now taking place on the earth ? "

"Come," said his guide ; and together they journeyed far over the earth. They passed through many cities whose streets were full of shouting mobs, and wherever they went the countryside was full of guns and wagons and moving columns.

At last they came to a country where there was a high plateau, and upon it one of the Elder Brothers of humanity stood looking out across the world. But His face was serene and free from anger ; His brow was clear and untroubled ; as He gazed, His eyes were full of love, and every common soldier of all those thousands who was loyal and fearless was His own beloved comrade ; He stood beside him on the battlefield, He watched over his sleep at night. He knew the hearts of all His comrades ; both their fears and their fearlessness. A great and mighty company they formed, throughout the world—a Round Table whose knights under many skies seek the Holy Grail. The Pacificist remembered that he had called the knights of this company degraded ; but their king knew that at the point of the bayonet, and at the mouth of the cannon, they were learning that steadfast courage and that supreme unhesitating self-sacrifice for an ideal which alone can give to man his place amongst the gods.

"Would you like to see the home of one of the uncontrolled fanatics ? " asked the

Pacificist's guide. Immediately they beheld a house situated in a mean street in one of the great cities of the world. There were dozens of houses exactly like it in the same street, and thousands in the same city. But inside there was neither fanatical excitement nor uncontrollable grief. A woman who bore the burden of not only the welfare, but the very lives, of the family upon her shoulders was proceeding methodically, and even cheerfully, with her work. In her eyes shone the light of an ideal—her ideal of a soldier's wife and a woman who was proud of her country. Even the children of the family had been instilled with that same pride, and loyally helped her by giving little trouble, and facing unaccustomed hardships without complaint. The

very keynote of the house seemed to be strength and self-reliance. There was a peace there which contrasted strangely with the armed neutrality of the Pacificist's home.

"This is indeed a strange thing," said the Pacificist. His guide replied :

"It may be that the Elder Brothers would fain speak softly to man ; but when his ears remain deaf and his eyes blind, so that all that is real is forgotten by him, and only the unreal is real, then does One come to him who says, 'I come not to bring peace, but a sword.'"

But in the Pacificist's heart a voice was proclaiming another message. It was this : "Judge not, that ye be not judged ; neither condemn, lest ye stand condemned."

JASPER SMITH.

LIFE NEVER DIES.

STRETCHED out before my horrified gaze was a vast battlefield. The mighty engines of war were reaping their harvest of human lives, were pouring agony and torture upon thousands of human beings. Everywhere my saddened gaze beheld desolation. Man suffered, and Nature, indissolubly linked with him, bore her full share of that suffering. Anguish fell upon me. "Can *nothing* be done to save these children of men," my soul cried, and my whole being concentrated in a supreme longing for knowledge.

Then I became aware of a man who stood beside me, gazing, too, upon the dreadful scene. Instinctively I turned to him, my burning desire finding utterance.

"Can you not help them ?" I questioned.

He turned, and I saw a Face filled with such tremendous power that I almost shrank away. But, glancing at Him again, I beheld with that power infinite wisdom and love. Compassion unutterable seemed to pour from Him, intense pity for the sufferers, yet He was perfectly serene.

"Look again," He said, pointing to the battlefield. I looked, and it was as if a veil had fallen from my sight. Sadness and pain were still there, the work of destruction continued, but the whole place was filled

with radiant Beings. Some passed to and fro, soothing and comforting distressful men, others helped those who, joyfully leaving the forms in which they had been imprisoned, soared upwards to fuller light and bliss. There were joyous meetings with loved ones who had gone before to the freer life, and who now gathered to welcome the newcomers.

It was a glorious sight ! Spirit triumphant over matter, Life all-conquering, Death vanquished anew by the Eternal Man.

And I saw that the One beside me was the Chief Helper among all that shining throng. His was the Power inspiring with strength both the sufferers and those who brought them aid. It was to Him that the Helpers looked for guidance.

I fell on my knees before Him, filled with gratitude and devotion.

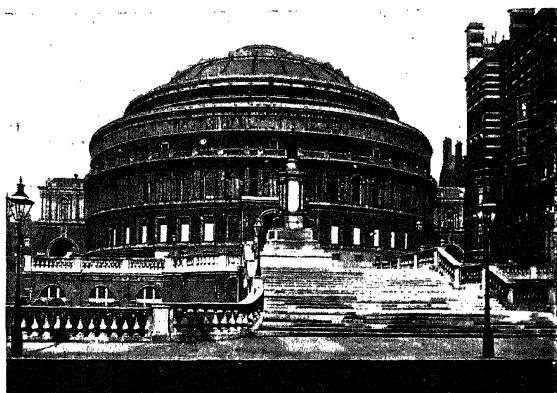
"Remember," He said, "what you have been taught, that *Life is everywhere*, *Life never dies*, and *Life evolves*. All things work according to God's Plan for men, and God is Love."

The vision faded. Earth, with its limitations, closed once more around me, but I carried back to my physical existence the atmosphere of that omnipotent Power which He had poured upon those in need.

Truly "the wise grieve neither for the living, nor for the dead." E. M. C.

TIM: A STORY OF THE FUTURE.

IT was a glorious midsummer day; the sun shone brightly over the vast city of London, gladdening Tim's heart as he lolled lazily with his little sister under a big elm tree in Kensington Gardens. To their left glistened the blue waters of the Serpentine; to their right, up the slope, could be seen the statue of a rider on a prancing steed. It was Sunday morning, and they had nothing to do till the big meeting at the Albert Hall in the afternoon.



ALBERT HALL, LONDON.

A wonderful Man was going to speak there, for the first time in London. Tim and Elsie had heard much about Him, how He had been in India and in other countries, and how, wherever He went, thousands of people had flocked to hear Him. The papers were full of the extraordinary things He had done, and His fame had spread everywhere. So they knew there would be a large crowd outside the Albert Hall that afternoon, and that they would have an excellent opportunity of earning some money. For Tim's profession was to entertain, by acrobatic feats and conjuring tricks, the people waiting outside theatres and music-

halls for cheap seats. Their father had been a famous acrobat; when his health failed, he had tried to earn a living as a conjuror, and taught all his tricks to the bright, intelligent little Tim. At his death, after a lingering illness, the two children were left alone in the world, their mother having died some time before, with nothing but two packs of greasy cards, a battered top-hat, and sundry other conjuring necessities. For two days they wandered the streets, practically starving, the landlady having kept their few odds and ends in lieu of rent. On the second day, disheartened and despairing, they were passing outside a theatre when they noticed a small boy go through a remarkable performance. They watched him turn somersaults, stand on his head, and do several feats, then hand his cap down the line of waiting people, and receive several coins.

Tim turned to his sister with shining eyes. "That's what we'll do," he cried. "I know heaps more tricks than that, everything Dad taught me, and

we'll make some money; you see!" Whereupon they set out for the dingy lodging-house which had been their home, interviewed the landlady and revealed their scheme under promise of secrecy. Not being a bad-hearted woman, she gave them their belongings on condition that they should pay her something when they had earned it. Next day, with beating hearts, the children took up their position in front of a long queue outside a theatre, and Tim began his performance. When it was over, Elsie took the hat round, and either Tim's eager face and genuine cleverness, or Elsie's wistful, appealing eyes, won the hearts of the spectators, for no

less than thirty pennies found their way into the hat. From that day they carried on the same profession, and never faced starvation again, though they sometimes went through bad times and had very few pennies.

Tim was now thirteen, Elsie eleven, and they had been in the business, as they proudly termed it, for two years.

At mid-day, the two wended their way across the shady Park to the Albert Hall. A throng of people had already gathered outside, and more arrived as time went on, until a dense crowd collected, stretching far down the street. Tim and Elsie were in luck's way, and made no less than four shillings. At half-past two, when the doors opened and the mass of people surged in to

turning, faced the crowd. A yearning look of compassionate tenderness came over His face. Then . . . He smiled, and His smile, radiant with love and sweetness, was yet so full of strength and power.

A choking sensation rose in Tim's throat. Glancing at Elsie, he saw that her eyes were full of tears. "Isn't He just lovely," she whispered.

Tim nodded; speech was impossible.

The Great Man entered the Hall; the people dispersed, and the two children made their way homewards, Tim telling Elsie all the wonderful things he had heard, how the Great Man had made people well who were ill, and had actually given blind people their sight.

Elsie listened with bated breath.

"We must see Him again next Sunday," she said.

But on the following Saturday, as they were crossing a crowded thoroughfare, Tim, darting unwisely in front of a motor, slipped and fell. The driver, who had not time to stop, swerved, but could not avoid an accident. A crowd gathered, a policeman appeared, and unconscious Tim was conveyed to the nearest hospital with Elsie, who was half-stunned by the shock.

There the doctors looked grave, and kind nurses did their utmost, but he did not regain consciousness. All night long Elsie remained beside him, crying so passionately when the nurses tried to take her away that they finally let her alone.

Towards morning, she fell asleep, worn out, and the sun was high in the heavens when she awoke. The sight of Tim, now flushed and feverish, breathing heavily and muttering to himself incoherently, brought back Elsie's grief, and she wept unrestrainedly. The nurse came and made her eat some bread and milk, trying to comfort and reassure her. An hour passed. The sound of a church bell roused Elsie again. What day was it? It must be Sunday. . . .

Suddenly a thought pierced her grief-



VIEW IN KENSINGTON GARDENS, LONDON

take their seats, they decided to wait and get a glimpse of the Great Man. Tim asked a policeman, in winning tones, how this might be accomplished. Then he and Elsie took their stand near a side-entrance, where, at half-past three, the Great Man was due to arrive. Long before that, however, the scene was one of bustle and confusion. Motors and carriages drove up; people hastily descended, another crowd gathered, for whom there was no room inside the building. At twenty-five past three there was a stir of expectation. A motor drew quietly up at the side-entrance. An eager hush fell on the assembled people; the door opened, and the Man stepped out Whom they had all come to see.

He walked up the few steps, paused, and

deadened senses like a gleam of light. Sunday! The day they were to have seen Him again, the Great Man! With this thought came another, of what Tim had told her :

" He made people well who were ill."

Tim was ill, dreadfully ill. He could make Tim well. She must go and ask Him now, at once.

Elsie rose from her curled-up position at the foot of the bed, a look of determination on her face, and with a loving glance at the restless Tim, slipped noiselessly from the ward and out into the street.

It took her some time to reach the Albert Hall, and the crowd there was already gathering, but she pushed her way to the side entrance, and waited, with white, set face.

The same bustle of motors and carriages began, the same expectant hush fell over the throng. Elsie drew a long breath. The motor was coming. . . .

Again it stopped at the side-door, and the Great Man stepped out.

But before He reached the entrance, a little figure, wild and dishevelled, in a torn, dirty frock, rushed to meet Him.

" Please, sir," sobbed Elsie, in tones of entreaty; " Oh, please, will you make Tim well again ? "

And she raised beseeching eyes to His face. There was a momentary silence. Then the clear, gentle voice of the Great Man was heard :

" Yes, little one," He said, " I will. Go back, and you will find him quite well."

And laying His hand for an instant on Elsie's head, He passed into the Hall.

There was a buzz of excitement. Inquisitive people crowded round Elsie, besieging her with questions. But a lady came forward and offered to drive her back to the

hospital. They found Tim sitting up, his mind perfectly clear and lucid, demanding something to eat, and wondering where he was. Nurses and doctors stood round him speechless with amazement. On seeing Elsie, he gave a cry of joy, and jumping up, ran to meet her. The happiness of the two children knew no bounds.

A week later they were again in the Park, and it was their last Sunday in London. Tim had agreed to give up his present profession, and he and Elsie were being sent to a house in the country where they could learn many useful things, so as to be able to help the Great Man they loved, when they grew older. For the lady had explained to them that, great and powerful though He



"PETER PAN" IN KENSINGTON GARDENS, LONDON.

The statue by Sir George Frampton is a tribute to the genius of J. M. Barrie, the novelist, by whose poetic fancy "Peter Pan—The boy who wouldn't grow up," was evolved and immortalised.

was, He wanted everyone to help Him in His work, even boys and girls.

" Elsie," said Tim, as he lay and gazed into the azure heights above him, " Do you remember Mother's story about the Friend above the bright blue sky? I think she meant our Great Man."

" He isn't up in the sky," said Elsie.

" No," Tim answered, a happy smile transfiguring his sensitive little face—" but perhaps He was then, and now He's come back to the world again." E. M. C.

THE GOAL AND THE WAY.

THREE was once a good man. He was a Christian, an earnest follower of the Christ. He loved his Master well, and followed all His teaching with loving care. He loved his neighbours—nay, even his enemies—tended the poor and sick, and praised God always.

Now it came to pass, in the prime of his manhood, that this man felt an intense longing to go forth to other countries to preach his Master's Gospel. So he put his affairs in order and went forth. He wandered for many years in strange, barbaric lands, teaching and caring for the people, and everywhere with love and reverence showing forth his Master's Name. Sometimes the people refused to hear him, saying that they followed their own master, Confucius, or Buddha, or Mahomet. Thereupon the man sorrowed greatly, for how could they be saved except by Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the World? And he pleaded with them so long, so earnestly, that at last they waxed wrath with him and cast him forth out of their cities.

At length, in his wanderings, he came to India. "Here," he thought, "is a field for my labours. Millions of souls to be converted to the true faith."

Howbeit, the man no sooner set foot in the country, than he fell sick and was at the point of death for many weeks. He lay at the house of one Sami, a Hindu, who nursed the man devotedly, giving him of his substance, and taking no reward.

The day came when the man was well again. He thought, "This Sami, a heathen, has shown virtues which would well become a Christian. He took me in, tended me, and I verily believe loves me as though he were my own son. Truly he is worthy to become a follower of my Master. I will prepare him to become a Christian, and then, indeed, he will be as my son. Through our work together, no doubt, many souls will be saved."

He therefore expounded the doctrines of Christianity to Sami, beseeching him to become baptized. "For only," he said, "by the blood of Jesus Christ canst thou be saved."

"Nay," said Sami, gravely, "I am a Hindu and follow another Master. He has shown me a path to follow. Shall I desert Him?"

"Oh, Sami, I tell thee there is only one Saviour of the world, Jesus of Nazareth, He alone can save thee," said the man. "Embrace His creed ere it be too late for thee."

"I love thee well," said Sami. "Would that our paths might lie together. But they are separate. I follow my master and thou thy Jesus of Nazareth."

Long the man pleaded with Sami. His heart yearned to him, and he sorrowed bitterly that one whom he loved so much should remain an "infidel."

They parted.

For many years the man laboured in other lands, always striving to gain more followers for his beloved Master. His love for Sami remained, and he never ceased to pray for his conversion.

At length the man's soul was called. He laid aside his earthly body and sought the heaven-world. Sami's body was also dead, and in the heaven-world they met.

"Ah! my poor Sami," cried the man; "thou art come to thy judgment. Would that my poor love might save thee."

"Nay," said Sami, "a greater love than thine has saved me. For see, my Master comes!"

"Thy Master!" The man looked. A Mighty Being surrounded by ineffable radiance, stood before them with His arms outstretched. The man saw Jesus, with his wounds and the crown of thorns. Sami saw Krishna, the ever-young and radiant, "the God of the home, the God of the child." They bowed themselves in an ecstasy of love and adoration.

The Master embraced them both in a smile of infinite love and compassion, and said:—

"Know ye not, oh my children, that the names of God are a thousand and one?"

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR VEGETARIANS.

Vegetable fare is, in the hands of the wise economist, far cheaper than a flesh diet. It is also, as those who have studied the question know, more health-giving and sustaining. Both these facts are of importance just now. None can tell how soon, in various parts of Europe, the war may not seriously affect the food supplies of the poor. A useful piece of work, which can be done to meet that possible crisis, will be to organise vegetarian kitchens in the poorer quarters of towns, which will provide cheap meals for the poor population. For the sum of one penny a skilful vegetarian cook can provide a regular "blow-out," as well as a most attractive repast. The way to prepare for work of this kind is for a number of people—ladies would be the most likely to be available—to lose no time in taking a course of lessons in vegetarian cooking from some expert. A week's lessons should be enough, if there is already some knowledge of cooking, since it would only be necessary to learn a few dishes for the purpose in hand. This is a piece of work which could be taken up equally well by vegetarians and non-vegetarians, and it would undoubtedly prove a great boon in time of need. It should be initiated, perhaps, by vegetarians, for the simple reason that non-vegetarians, wedded, for the most part, to conventional notions of food-values, are hardly likely to think of it of their own accord. The Theosophical Society, or the Order of the Star in the East, in any country, will be able to give information to inquirers as to the names and addresses of expert vegetarian cooks from whom lessons can be taken. Once the art has been learnt, the next step will be simply to hire a room and begin. Such a beginning will, of course, become advisable only in the event of actual stress being felt. Before that it is hardly likely that a vegetarian kitchen would be patronised. That, however, is no reason for refraining from taking the necessary lessons,

even now. The sooner the better; for things move swiftly in these days.

* * *

AN IDEAL BOYS' HOME IN THE SLUMS.

No rules, no regulations, no prohibitions, and no corporal punishment. This, says the *Daily Sketch*, of July 22nd, is the delightful system on which a lady at High Wycombe is running a home for homeless boys of all ages from five to fifteen or over, drawn from the worst surroundings in slums of big towns.

There never was such a happy, harmonious home. "Don't do that!" "You mustn't go in there!" "Why?" and "Why not?" are seldom heard.

The results are wonderful. Things get done and obedience and order seem to come naturally from the least hopeful material.

Each boy's individual inclination is consulted, and he is trained in a skilled trade and kept at home till he can earn his own living.

Miss Wright's latest triumph has just been achieved.

A boy came to her at the age of eight with an absolutely ungovernable temper. He flew into rages every day, and tore his clothes to ribbons and smashed the furniture. Miss Wright tried to develop his sense of humour, and made him laugh when he wanted to indulge in passionate outbursts.

She also trained his aptitude for drawing. At fourteen he showed great skill and originality in designing. He was apprenticed to a firm who made decorative works of art, and at twenty was made manager of the firm. Now, at twenty-one, he has just been taken into partnership.

Miss Wright has a big house, and a big garden, and a big family of sixteen boys. They all live together just as if they were at home, and she is "mother" to them all.

The words Orphanage, Institution, or Home (with a capital H) are taboo. The boys are brought up to look on each other as a big family of brothers. The younger ones go to the elementary school; one is

going to the grammar school ; two are apprenticed in the town. When they get home they go scouting, or to the pictures, or run errands, or garden.

At present they are all sleeping out in big tents on the lawn. Miss Wright, of course, sleeps out of doors, too.

Her "children" are constantly writing to her of their adventures in foreign lands, and come back "home" for holidays. One boy was sent to a farm in Manitoba. There he found a brother who had disappeared many years before, and who persuaded him to go out west, where he got stranded. He "tramped" back 1000 miles across Canada to the friends he had started with, and asked them to take him back. Another is in a regimental band at Khartoum ; another at a motor garage in Winnipeg. Others are dental mechanics, cabinet-makers, engineers.

Miss Wright informed the *Daily Sketch* that she had only found it necessary three times in twelve years to administer a whipping to any boys. For minor offences boys are sent to bed ; sometimes they are sent to Coventry.

THE CHURCHES AND THE LABOUR MOVEMENT.

The Rev. R. J. Campbell, speaking a short while back on the Church and the New Age, had some remarks to make on the relation of the Church to the Labour Movement and its demands. Mr. Campbell said :—

"I am increasingly of opinion that however much we may be to blame for laxity and unfaithfulness in this or that particular, it is no use belabouring the Churches as entirely, or even mainly, responsible for the present marked decline of interest in organised religion. It is a world-wide phenomenon, and all Churches, without exception, are affected by it.

"It is not, for instance, our failure to identify ourselves with the legitimate aspirations of the proletariat that is at the bottom of the matter, though we are often told so, and have invited Labour leaders on to our platforms to scourge us for our misdoings in this respect. The proletariat would not come

to church in greater numbers than now if we fought their battle every Sunday, and did nothing else. They do not want our spiritual message, and if they want to hear a man discourse on economics—which I also take leave to doubt—it would bore them to death if they had it every Sunday, and they much prefer watching a football match ; they can hear it better from the lips of a politician than a preacher.

"I have learned a good deal by the hard work I have done myself on Labour platforms. I am in the fullest sympathy with the demand of the workers for a wider, fuller life, for a greater measure of social justice and of every opportunity for self-expression, but I have come to be very sceptical about the conscious spirituality of the demand. The workers want more of the good things of this world, and quite right too ; they are entitled to it ; but I think they have got to wait awhile before they rediscover that man cannot live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

There is a something of disappointment in this, and much of truth. The wider truth would, however, seem to lie in the recognition (1) that Nature works out her Plan by specialising instruments for the carrying out of particular parts of the Plan ; that what we call classes and movements are such instruments, each having its particular task to perform as a contribution to the whole ; and that, therefore—especially in a time like the present, where much is being carried through swiftly—we should not expect "all-roundness" and catholicity of view from such instruments. The need felt, in each case, determines the function of the instrument, and it is well for Nature's purposes that the latter should, at least till the battle is more or less won, concentrate on that need. (2) That the time for the spiritual synthesising of all these specialised efforts will come with the hour of victory : that is to say, when the work of destruction has been practically completed, and the greater work of reconstruction is beginning. That time is at hand, but not yet. As for the part which the churches will play in the coming

reconstruction, that depends, in the first instance, on how far they are willing to overhaul and reconstruct themselves.

* * *

WHAT THE MYSTICS HAVE ALWAYS KNOWN.

We quote the following passage from a letter which appeared in the *Referee* of some weeks ago, from the pen of the well-known actor and author, Mr. Arthur Scott-Craven. It gives an admirable description of the experience commonly spoken of as Cosmic Consciousness, which, revealed in glimpses at first, becomes later on the steady and normal consciousness of the highly-unfolded Mystic or Occultist. We do not know that we have ever seen this experience more felicitously expressed :—

"Years ago, as a small 'lower boy' at Eton, I remember reading an account, written by Sir Humphry Davey in his *Diary*, of a strange and wonderful experience that had befallen him—an actual realisation not only of the unity of Nature, but the absolute and definite *knowledge* that we were all, in different stages of growth, indissolubly and eternally bound to one another, that we were *all* literally and absolutely *one*—every blade of grass, every leaf, every rock, every form of mineral life, plant life, animal life. He felt, with overwhelming certainty, in harmony and at one with all things in Nature and his literal unity with God—the ever-inconceivable, ever-incomprehensible, all-pervading God. And God he saw not only manifested in every form of life with complete realisation, but he *knew* in that indescribably supreme moment, beyond the remote possibility of every doubting again, that there was that in him which had *always* been, which would never hereafter cease to be, and that for a few splendid moments he had transcended space and time, recognising them as necessary limitations of the human mind, knowing that all seeming separateness was but the working fiction of the universe, and that he—the true he—the eternal, undying, indestructible 'ego,' independent of forms, change, birth, decay, death, ever was, ever would be, ever *had* been. He realised, in other words, the 'Eternal

Now,' what St. Francis described as the Beatific Vision, what others have called the flash of cosmic consciousness, once felt, eternally known, and incapable of being forgotten.

"This identical experience has been realised again and again by men of every land, and described in every nation's literature. That experience befell Sir Humphry Davey, President of the Royal Society, but it has come to all sorts and conditions of men and women who would have fallen under the category of 'semi-educated,' even 'wholly illiterate.' Walt Whitman had the identical experience, Swedenborg also, likewise Emerson, Annie Besant, Edward Carpenter, a thousand other living people of all grades and types, and I should be unutterably cowardly and ungrateful if I attempted to disguise the fact that this indescribably wonderful experience had also befallen me.

"After such an experience one simply *knows*, beyond all question, that the dropping of the physical body at death is an event that we have undergone a hundred times before, that it merely means an extension of consciousness and a most welcome temporary release from an imprisoning vehicle, and that it no more affects the 'ego' than the taking off of one's clothes affects the life of the physical body."

* * *

THE EARTH AS A LIVING CREATURE.

The *National Review* for August contains a brilliant article by Mr. J. Arthur Hill, entitled "Is the Earth Alive?" in which he argues the reasonable nature of the Fechnerian hypothesis of a single organic life animating our globe as a whole, to which all separate lives are as the individual cells to the human body. This Earth-Life, he says, "is of a higher character than any animal, for it includes all animals and all human beings, comprising in its spirit all their spiritual activities, and having its own activities as well." Mr. Hill would do well here to study the Theosophical version of this important hypothesis, and to note the distinction which Theosophy draws between the rudimentary elemental life which dwells in the matter of each of the planes—by

virtue of which the totality of such matter, on every plane, becomes, in a certain sense, a single living creature—and that higher unfolded Life which, as it were, descends upon and ensouls the world, using the elemental life and matter on every plane as Its vehicle. In the former sense, the earth is, as the ancients believed, an animal. In the latter sense, it is the vehicle of a conscious Divine Life. Mr. Hill is, however, thoroughly just in his estimate of the fruitful and illuminating character of this conception of an organic Earth-Life to the problem of conscience and morals. After showing how the growth of the individual consciousness is achieved by the organising and linking up of experience, passing ever from "disjointednesses" to harmony and unification, and from this to the synthesising of new disharmonies, he remarks: "So with the earth spirit. Being far greater than the human subsidiary spirits, it is longer in coming to maturity. Its elements are still largely at loggerheads with each other. The nations war against each other, and universal peace seems a long time in coming. But steadily, steadily, works the earth spirit, and the nations, almost unconsciously—like somnambulists—carry out its will. Seeing that union is strength, they absorb neighbouring States, or amalgamate a turbulent group of rival States into a powerful German Empire. They are working, consciously or unconsciously, towards universal at-one-ment. Already a federation of European States is talked of; to-day an

enthusiast's dream, to-morrow a statesman's practical politics. States which hold aloof will be automatically extinguished, as were lawless individual savages when tribes began to form. Union is the political watchword. Labour is combining throughout the world—East is learning from West, and West from East. China sends her students to Oxford, Cambridge, Jena, Harvard, and welcomes Western methods. India repays our civilising with the poems of Tagore. In trade, thousands of small businesses are unified in a few great combines, preparing for some kind of Socialism. Finance spreads its world-wide network. Science is becoming international. The frontiers are melting; coalescence, unity, harmony, are being achieved. The earth-spirit is reconciling its warring elements. When it succeeds in the complete reconciliation; when the era of universal peace and brotherhood shall dawn; when it reaches its huge equivalent of the ripe, calm, contented, wisdom of human age—ah, then will come a state of things which we can but dimly pre-figure. But it will come. The age of gold is in the future, not the past. It is our duty and our privilege to hasten the coming of this millennium. And even this is not the end. We cannot conceive the things that shall be. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard. Enough for us to know the tendency, and to trust ourselves to it, actively co-operating."

The whole article is an admirable structure of thought, conceived on an imposing and imaginative scale, and well repays study.

COURRIER

NOUS assistons en France à un grand mouvement qui entraîne en ce moment les jeunes gens vers la vie physique et les sports. A mesure que la vie des villes devient de plus en plus brutale et forcenée, les hommes semblent rêver à nouveau d'une vie spacieuse et pure, où d'autres plaisirs leur seraient rendus; ils voudraient restaurer dans leurs corps chétifs l'antique force virile.

Le Marquis de Polignac vient de fonder à Reims un grand *Collège d'Athlètes*, école d'Education physique et de Sports; nous

FRANCAIS.

pouvons dire que depuis longtemps rien n'a été tenté qui soit pour la race toute entière d'une aussi grande importance.

Voici le manifeste du Collège d'Athlètes, signé par : Auguste Rodin, Jean Richépin, Gabriel Bouvalet, Marquis de Polignac, Dr. Boucard, Dr. Helme, Maurice Cobrat et Jacques Balsan :—

"Justement émus par les ravages de l'alcoolisme et de la tuberculose qui atteignent la force française dans ses sources vives, tous les esprits clairvoyants s'inquiète du remède."

Le meilleur moyen de combattre ces fléaux, c'est de généraliser le goût et la pratique des exercices physiques. Il semble qu'un sûr instinct en avertisse la jeunesse. Depuis longtemps déjà, de nombreuses associations sportives se sont formées à Paris et en province. Elles groupent des milliers de jeunes athlètes, les éduquent et les dirigent. Partout où elles n'existent pas, il faut les établir. Dans cette intention se sont déjà fondées de grandes fédérations auxquelles nous ne voulons pas nous substituer. Mais, pour réaliser pleinement la renaissance physique, il ne suffit pas d'appeler aux joies salutaires du sport toute la jeunesse des villes et des campagnes. Il nous manque encore un centre d'entraînement, un centre de formation où se prépareront, en même temps que des instructeurs et des entraîneurs, les champions de ces grandes épreuves internationales que la France ne peut ignorer et où elle doit reconquérir son rang.

A cet effet, nous organisons le Collège d'Athlètes, "école de renaissance physique." Nous avons conscience de préparer ainsi l'amélioration de l'individu et de garantir l'avenir de notre race et sa force créatrice.

Il n'y a point d'antagonisme entre le muscle et l'intelligence. L'admirable exemple de l'antiquité grecque et latine nous inspire, au contraire, et nous guide vers un équilibre harmonieux du corps et de l'esprit."

Bien entendu le collège de Reims n'est pas dans l'esprit de ses organisateurs le but suprême qu'on puisse attendre. Ils savent qu'il rendra de grands services; chaque année de nombreux professeurs en sortiront pour répandre dans la France entière un

système logique et raisonnable d'entraînement; chaque année, des médecins familiarisés avec la méthode naturelle soigneront les gens bien portants mieux encore qu'ils ne savaient soigner les malades, mais le Collège d'Athlètes de Reims doit aussi couvrir la France de filiales. Il faut que dans chaque province une école semblable se fonde et qu'elle s'adapte aux caractéristiques de la race et du milieu. Déjà de nouveaux collèges établis sur le modèle de celui de Reims, ont été créés à Rouen et à Aurillac, d'autres s'ouvriront bientôt à Pau, à Nice, etc.

Le plan que se propose le Comité du Collège d'Athlètes de Reims est donc un plan grandiose: faire des hommes sains et robustes, régénérer la population française amoindrie par l'alcool et l'oisiveté physique. Quand il sera réalisé, la vie physique de la nation pourra entrer en parallèle avec sa vie intellectuelle. L'on verra un peuple rajeuni sortir des écoles et des universités, la mortalité baissera, la santé physique et morale régnera et le pays tout entier sera prêt pour de nouvelles destinées.

* * *

A Lourdes s'est tenu le 25 ième Congrès Eucharistique. Cette manifestation a été très importante. Jamais encore autant que cette année le Congrès n'a mérité le qualificatif *d'international*. Les congressistes ont afflué de toutes les parties du monde.

Le Cardinal Luçon, doyen des cardinaux français, dans un discours d'ouverture dit que nulle ville n'était mieux qualifiée que Lourdes pour permettre à des catholiques représentant le monde entier, de proclamer en face de la négation matérialiste, l'affirmation la plus grande des vérités de leur foi.

We plead, O God! for some new ray
Of light for guidance on our way;
Based not on faith, but clearer sight,
Dispelling these dark clouds of night;
This doubt, this dread, this trembling fear;
This thought that mars our blessings here.
This restless mind, with bolder sway,
Rejects the dogmas of the day,
Taught by jarring sects and schools

To fetter reason with their rules.
We seek to know Thee as Thou art—
Our place with Thee—and then the part
We play in this stupendous plan.
Creator Infinite, and man,
Lift up this veil obscuring sight;
Command again: "Let there be light!"
Reveal this secret of Thy Throne;
We search in darkness the unknown.

Extract from *The Divine Plan of the Ages*; quoted from a poem published in a *Philadelphia Journal*.